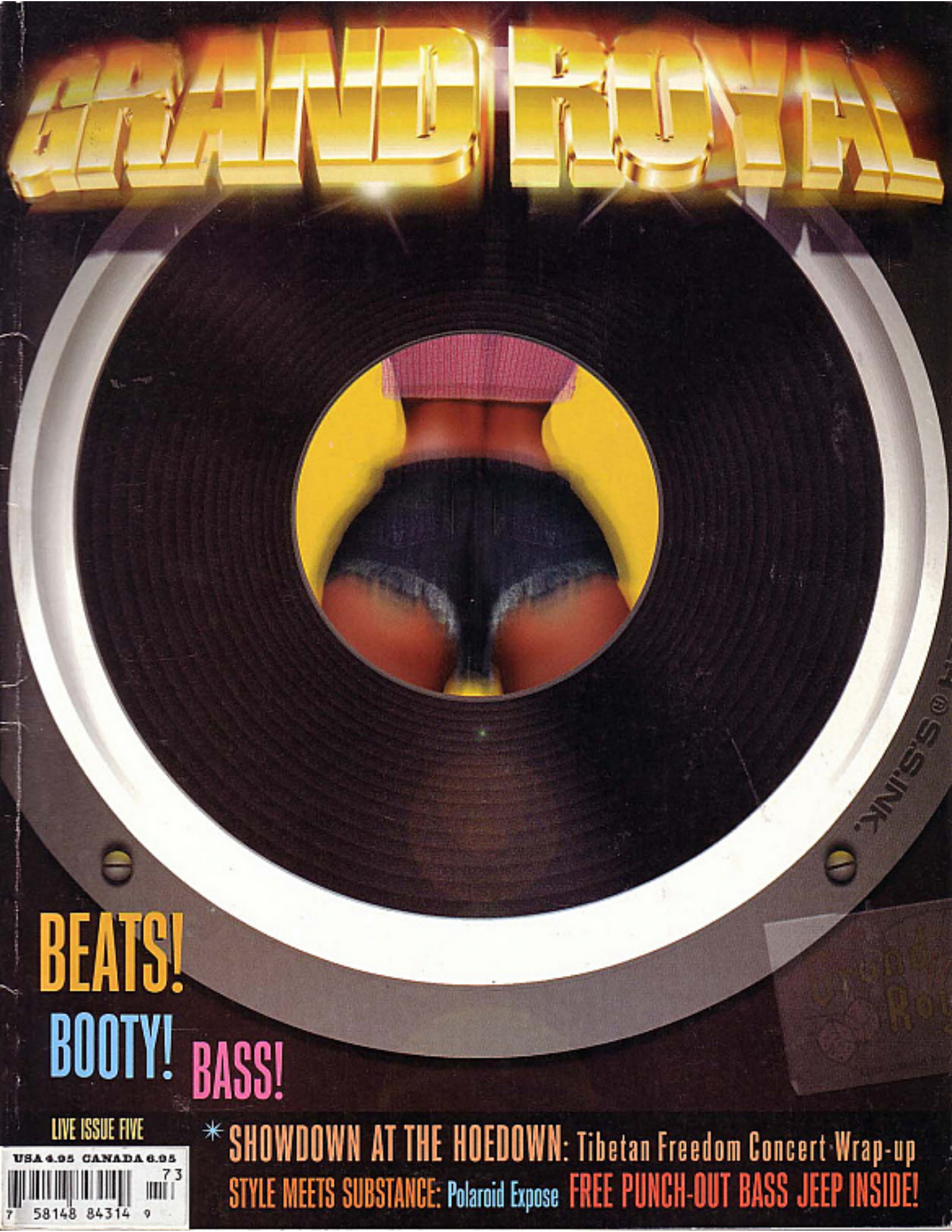
GRAND ROYAL



BEATS!

BOOTY! BASS!

LIVE ISSUE FIVE

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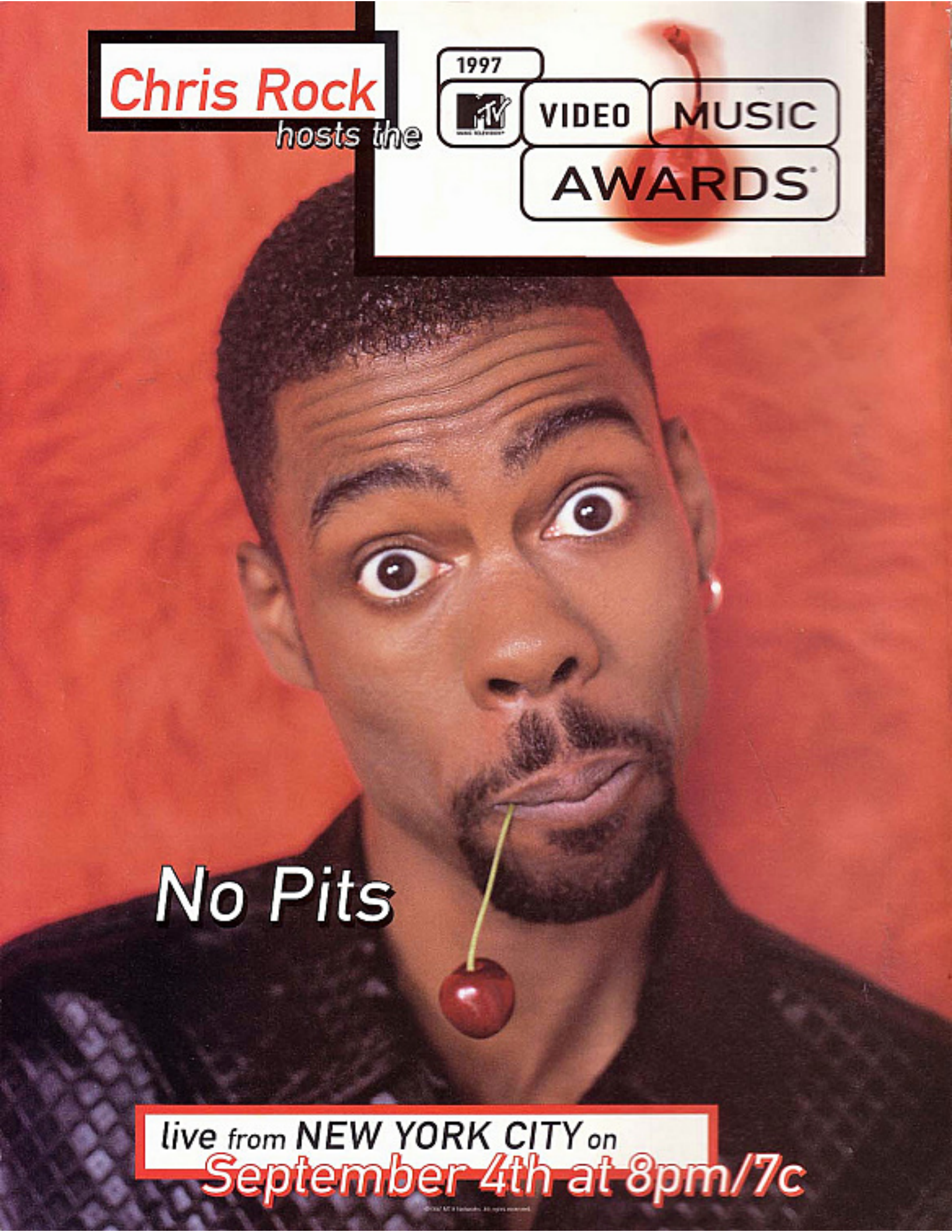
✳ SHOWDOWN AT THE HOEDOWN: Tibetan Freedom Concert Wrap-up

STYLE MEETS SUBSTANCE: Polaroid Expose FREE PUNCH-OUT BASS JEEP INSIDE!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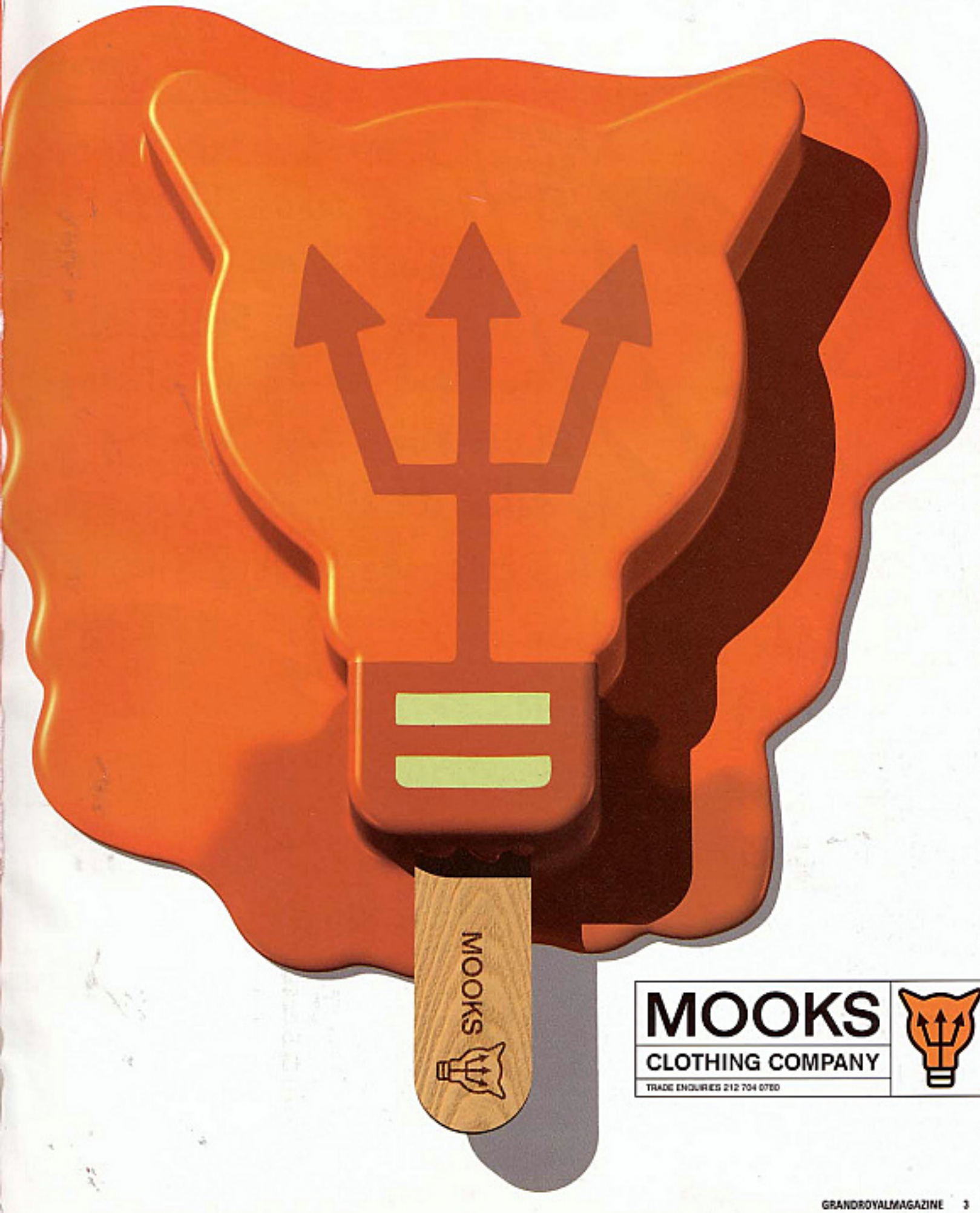

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I must have been asleep when They abducted me. They took me to their spaceship and put me in a strange, **Blue room** and "told" me (somehow) to take off all my clothes...

I remember this cold, steel table that I was made to lay down on.

They Forced me to listen to FOREST FOR THE TREES, that dog, WHISKEYTOWN, MELONY, SWEET 75, The CRYSTAL METHOD and SUBCIRCUS. Then, they stuck a probe up my butt.

It Looked Like This.

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GRAND ROYAL

Table Of Contents:

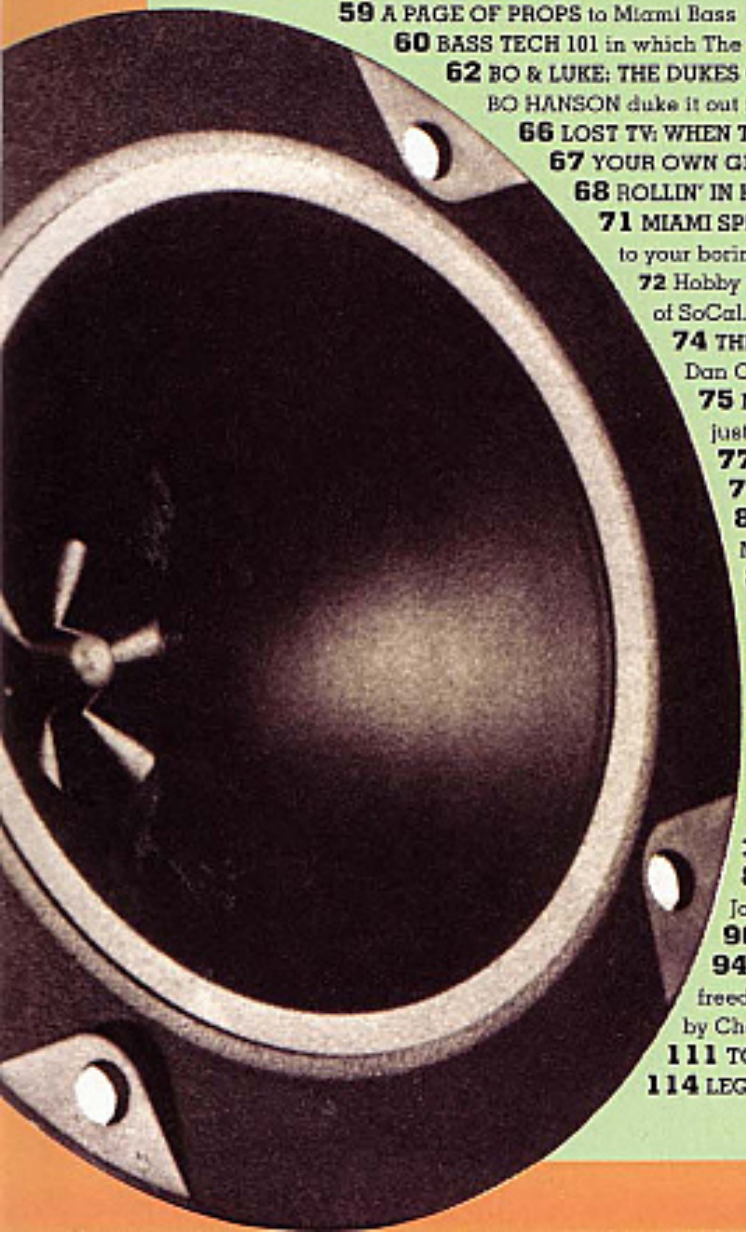
5 TABLE OF CONTENTS is what yr reading
8 EDITORIAL/ MASTHEAD who does what and why
12 HOT LETTERS readers write long and right wrongs
16 THE LINK TO THE KINK an evolution of whitey's afro
21 GRAND ROYAL REPORTS: Kenny Rogers' Roasters by Supergrass and Jay Babcock AND
23 MORE LEGENDS OF CHICKEN starring the ill-fated Muhammad Ali's Rotisserie Chicken and too successful Roy Rogers
26 OBSOLETE BUT STILL DOPE DEPT.: THE POLAROID LAND CAMERA by Ryze,
28 A GALLERY OF POLAROIDS. **(31)** HENRY DREYFUS. designer of modern Polaroids, and
36 CHARLES EAMES. Polaroid visionary.
39 OTHAR TURNER last of the fife and drum men. ALSO:
41 JUDAH BAUER on Othar's reluctant jam session
43 SOUND SYSTEM STYLEE a Kingston tradition updated for Lafayette St.
44 RICKY POWELL'S MUSIC TO GET BUSY TO and other peoples', too

BEATS! BASS!! BOOTY!!! aww yeaah...

48 WELCOME TO PLANET BASS by Mike D.
50 INDIANA TICK IN THE TEMPLE OF BOOM! party hearty with AfroRican/High Town DJ Derrick Rahming and DJ Laz in Miami and Lauderdale
56 PROFESSOR BOOTY the history and mystery of Miami Bass, by Dave Tompkins
58 DJ SHADOW: WHAT MIAMI BASS MEANS to the West Coast scene
59 A PAGE OF PROPS to Miami Bass
60 BASS TECH 101 in which The Dust Brothers get the how-to from Bass producer Tony Mercedes
62 BO & LUKE: THE DUKES OF BASS in which LUKE (Skywalker) and PANDISC'S BO HANSON duke it out for the kingdom of Bass. The Ref: Dan C.
66 LOST TV: WHEN TRIBE 8 PLAYED LUKE'S PEEP SHOW oh yes
67 YOUR OWN GR BOOTY BUGGY! designed by Evan Mack
68 ROLLIN' IN HOTLANTA WITH SO SO DEF'S LIL' JON and Dave T.
71 MIAMI SPICE! Ubiquitous Virge shows you how to bring that boomin' bass to your boring North Of the Border existence AND
72 Hobby Squad's Ian Rocks the BEATS in the JEEP through the STREETS of SoCal. Wacky hijinks!
74 THE CARS THAT GO BOOM inside the IASCA competitions with Dan Catalano
75 MAGGOTRON'S BRAIN Be he bastard of Bootsy and Sun Ra or just his own creation?
77 BOOTY CALL Lori Denman talks to the booty models
79 MAGIC MIKE Turntable terrorist tells it to Tompkins
80 REAL AMERICAN BADASS: CARL FISCHER "creator" of Miami Beach
82 THE HITCHCOCK OF HOOTCHIE Luke's video director, Jeff Kennedy
83 HOW TO DO DA DIP with scenes from the original Dip video.
84 Messages from the soul sisters. Two Feminist Perspectives.
85 BODY ROCK how low end frequencies actually affect the body by Mark Driver
87 KID ROCK'S MIAMI BASS QUIZ now tell us what you've learned

IN THE DEEP END

88 STAR WARS BREAKBEATS bumpin' with the other Luke by Jake Fogelnest
90 AVANT GARDE MAGAZINE a tribute by Geoff McFetridge
94 LEAVE YOUR EGOS AT THE DOOR the second annual Tibet freedom concert as seen by Ian and Zoe Rogers. Exclusive shots by Cheryl Dunn and others.
111 TOP TEN REASONS THE BEASTIES' ALBUM ISN'T OUT
114 LEGACY: Jacques Cousteau



OUTDOOR
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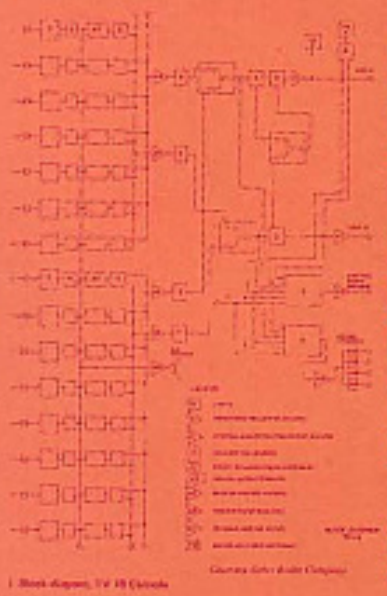
Editorial



Though every media outlet deserves a share of cynicism and scrutiny from its readers, Grand Royal magazine, owing to its peculiar position—that is, being published by people you usually read about—seems to always attract the same two questions: (1) Do the Beastie Boys really have anything to do with this magazine? and (2) Just what is Grand Royal magazine about?

Believe it or not, the answer to the first is a definite YES. If the band is in Los Angeles (where the magazine's offices are located, "in a secret hideout inside an abandoned warehouse"), Mike at least can be seen breathing down Eric "The Minister"'s neck (a la Mr. White to Jimmy Olsen) the sort of aphorisms you definitely don't learn in journalism school:

Regarding the GR attitude: "Eric, we need *more* in-jokes, not less."

Regarding the decision-making hierarchy: "All I know is, I am at the *top!*"

And what Gladstone says is the best piece of advice about journalism he's ever gotten: "Being *first* is meaningless, except in sex and relay races." So much for "scoops."

If the band is not in Los Angeles, but in other undisclosed locations (such as the submarine where their new album is allegedly being recorded —see Top Ten BBs Recording Delays, p. 111), D is in constant communication via cell, e-mail, semaphore... Just two weeks ago, we had to hold a meeting in LaGuardia airport because it was the only place we were both gonna be for 15 minutes (This is true!).

The other members of the group may not always be as directly involved, but we can assure you that their viewpoints are equally reflected in Grand Royal's content.

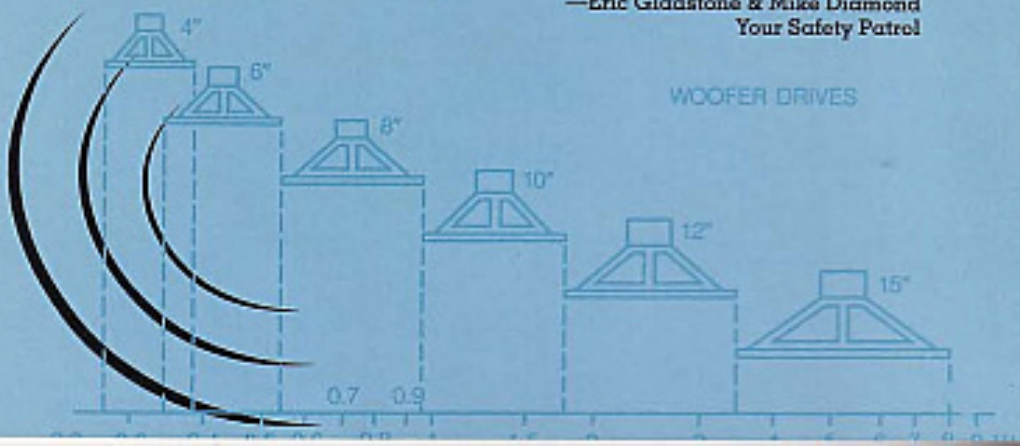
Which brings us to question (2). Basically, Grand Royal is about whatever the band—and our associated field reporters, staffers, techno-ferrells, and vocal fans—conceive and will it to be. We feel there's no point in doing what plenty of magazines are already doing. So we're just trying to capture whatever catches our fancy, and hoping some good people want to share the adventure.

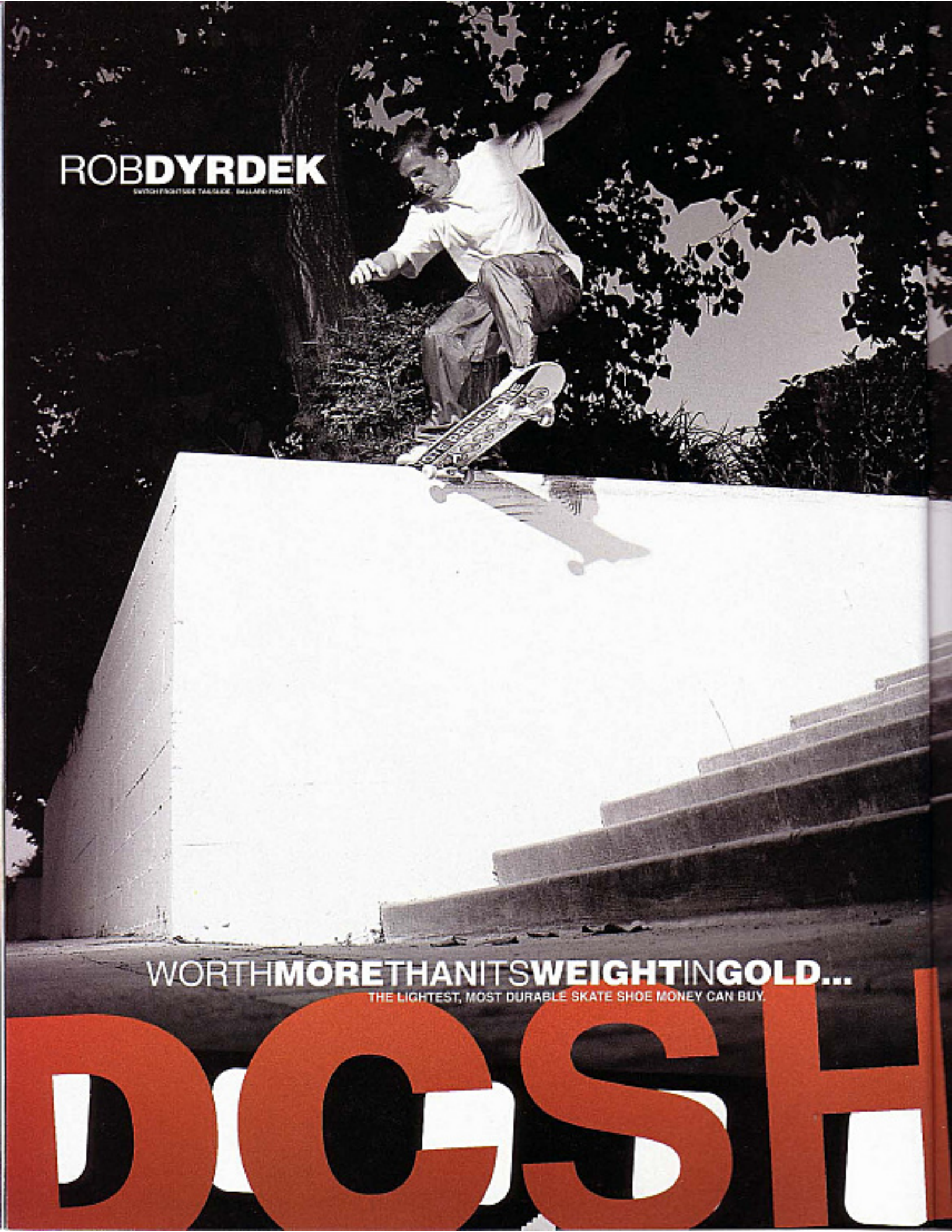
The central theme of this issue is a perfect example. Following a series of discussions and impromptu Bass music dance parties on the main floor of Grand Royal records with The Tick (the label's Radio Promotions man) and his jumbo-size Lasonic Boombox, our high-and-wide search for Issue 5's central theme ended. "Miami Bass Music needs some respect," we said to each other. So shall it be written. So shall it be done.

Our special one-time-only 40 page Bass section begins on page 48. And naturally, the plumb assignment of spending a party weekend with Bass legend Derrick Rahming (ex-AfroRican) went to The Tick. His tale starts on page 50. That's not all, of course—other Bass champs representing include Luther "Luke" Campbell, Magic Mike, Bo "Pandisc" Hanson, DJ Laz, So So Def's Lil' Jon, and the one the only Maggotron. Plus more, much more, of what you're funkin' for.

Now, go make that booty bounce.

—Eric Gladstone & Mike Diamond
Your Safety Patrol

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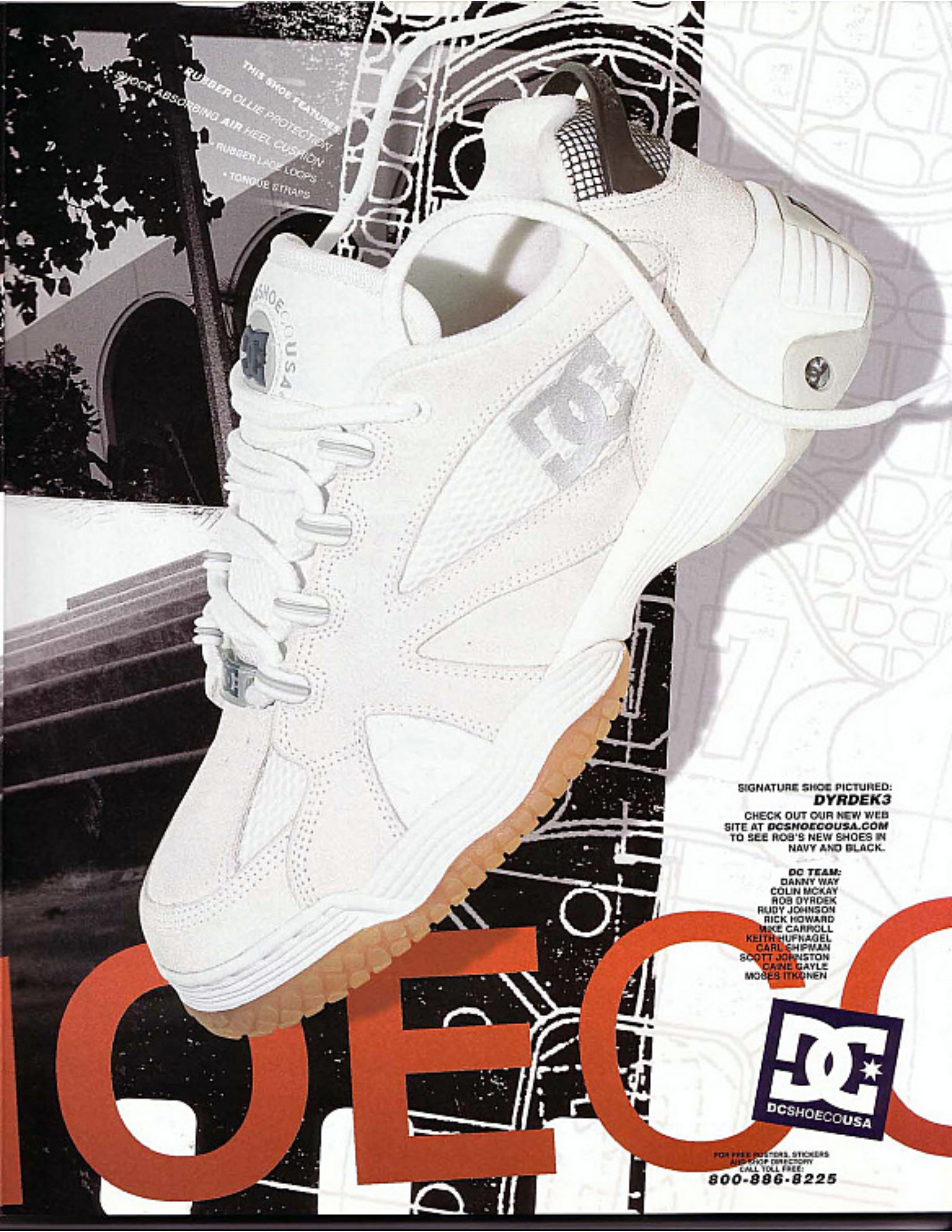
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Hot Letters

Burning queries from the dedicated readers of Grand Royal

Dear Granny Royale:

Everyday, my eyes are assaulted by the mullet. In the small town in which I live, the mullet is the standard haircut for almost everyone. It is unbelievable how many mullets I spot each day. I am a manager at a movie theater, so I have to deal with the mullet-wearing public everyday.

My boss, JR, is even a mullethead. His mullet is especially 80s. It is very long in back and feathered on top. The employees harass him to cut it daily, but he claims it is a magnet for women. Fortunately for him much of our town's population is stuck in the eighties, so his mullet goes unnoticed.

I cannot begin to understand how he, or any other mullethead, for that matter can look in the mirror each day and think they look good. In one last attempt to rid my workplace of the mullet, I xeroxed your article and left it on JR's desk. Before showing him, I showed my coworkers, hoping they would share in my amusement, only to find out many of them were former mullets, who did not regret the haircut. I do not think JR even noticed the article, he was too busy blasting 80's metal in the office. Is there any way we can save ourselves from the mullet?

Jennifer Toth
Stephens City, VA.

Yes, Jennifer, buy your entire town copies of this issue and show them the Link To The Kink story. (p.16) Convince them that the mullet is over, and this is the new hip look. It may not improve the aesthetic of your surroundings, but at least you'll have a sense of empowerment.

Dear Granny Royale:

All this Tibet shit around '94 was cool when it was a side thing at Lollapalooza. Now it's clear the music has taken a back seat and Tibet's the main focus. You wanna be a MC and make music, fine. You wanna be a MC, build a fan base, and then become a political leader for your fan base, fuck that. Especially for something you discovered while on Acid. Are the Beastie Boys going to put on a hip-hop concert bringing people together trying to stop the East vs. West battle? No. But instead, do a show with mainly a line up of MTV poster boys for a place one person didn't like what was going on there while on vacation. Part of the Beastie Boys are quickly becoming the Don Henleys of the 90's, just replace the Rain Forest with Tibet. Same bullshit, different cause. More than half the bands on the Tibet show are just there to promote their new LP and hawk merchandise. If MTV didn't cover it like it was the ressurection of Kurt Kobain, you wouldnt see that many bands there.

And the point of asking fans to donate money to Milarepa is ridiculous. A t-shirt, LP, video and concert ticket should be enough. Like Eric Wright said, "You always gotta give it up for your fans, if it wasn't for them you wouldnt be anybody." If Yauch wants to donate every dime he has to Tibet, that's fine. But on the whole '94/'95 tour there was booths set up everywhere to get fans to give money. Oh yeah, but you could send the Dali Lama (or however it's spelled) a birthday card. It got to the point to where u didn't know if you were at a concert or religious gathering trying to convert people into Buddhism.

What they do with their money is their business, my point is that someone who has a place in Cali, NY, Utah and God knows where else is asking for donations is fucked. Get your other celeb friends to donate money. But going on and on about Tibet when many people have a hard enough time with everyday problems here. Like that woman who donated $2 grand to everybody who got flooded. That's cool, those people need help, that lady donated her millions anonymously. There's too many problems here to worry about other people's shit. Like Everlast said "You gotta clean up your own backyard before you go knocking on your neighbor's door."

I had my parents to show me right and wrong. I dont look for entertainers to do that. When people start looking there, then something's fucked. And when entertainers feel its their job to preach right from wrong, they are either fucked in the head or got a ego problem. "All u do is write rhymes, frontin' with yours making it harder for mine, ya lyn king." — "Nine"

They have made people aware, that's why I said it was cool in '94 at Lollapalooza, letting people know what's up in other parts of the world. Yauch has a cause, he let people be aware of it. But now now you cant hear the

words Beastie Boys without Tibet mentioned. Like Saddam Hussein—Iraq, Bill Clinton—US President, Beastie Boys—Tibet. When you see the BBoys, you see a picture of Tibet beside them. It's like fuck the music, Free Tibet.

Brent Williamson
Birmingham, AL

The preceding was sent as an e-mail to resident hobbyist and webfrom Big Gun Ian Rogers. Ian responds: I see where you're coming from, but the idea that a band or an MC has some sort of "responsibility" to you or anyone to stick to performing music, a certain style of music, or anything at all is completely ridiculous. Entertainers are people. People change. And people should be allowed to do whatever they feel like doing without those who they've entertained jumping up and claiming they owe them. You're wrong. They didn't take money at those booths. They were there to raise awareness. Period. People tried to give Milarepa donations at that booth and they were turned away. Go to the Milarepa WWW site and you'll find no way for you to send in money. At last year's TibetanFreedom Concert, the bands were hand-picked by Adam, most of them were his friends, playing because it was either something they cared about or something they wanted to learn about. This year, I dunno, maybe some got involved because it's the cool thing to do, but who cares? They can't sell merchandise there, I don't think they're getting paid for the gig, and if it gets people to tune in and think about the cause, then it's doing exactly what Milarepa is trying to do.The stuff about the Don Henley of the 90s and the acid trip was pretty funny, though. —Ian [Yeah, talk about the Link To The Kink! For more on this year's Freedom Concert, see p.54—Ed.]

Dear Granny Royale:

Sorry to bother you again, but I just wanted to make a little clarification on my ideas about how cool Bigfoot is. The Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest have always had legends of a superhuman wildman prowling the woods, stealing children ("sasquatch" is actually a meld of a bunch of different tribes' names for the creature). Some people think Bigfoot's an alien, some think he's psychic, some think he can go into other dimensions!

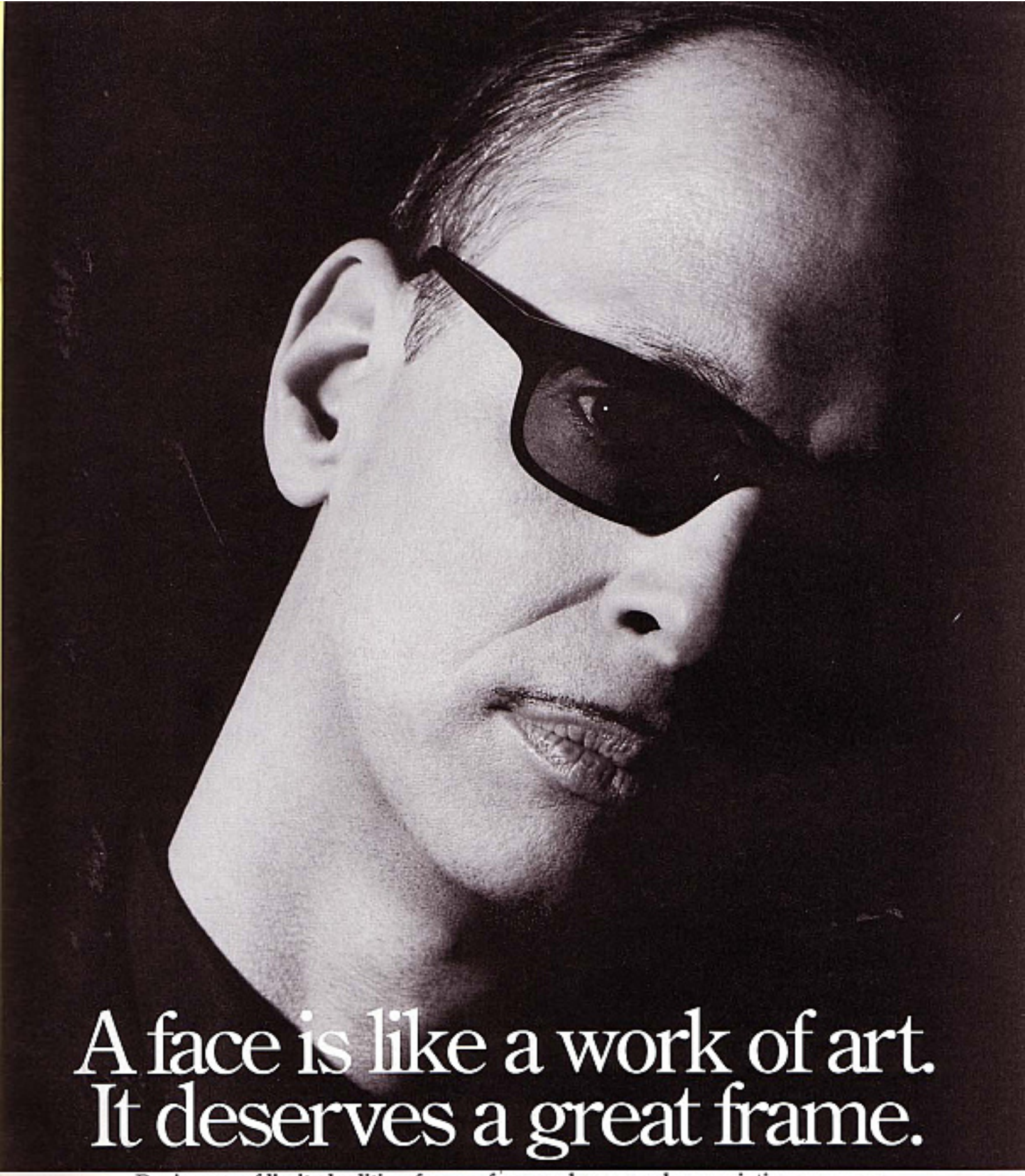
There are stories of them picking cars up out of ditches to get back on the road, of them carrying injured hunters miles to safety, of them attacking and killing trappers (Pres. Teddy Roosevelt's book "Wilderness Hunter"). Stories, like Albert Ostman's—how he was kidnapped while prospecting in the mountains by a bigfoot in order to be used for breeding with the creature's daughter! The story of Ape Canyon, where these lumberjacks were besieged by a bunch of screaming, rock-throwing bigfeet that almost destroyed their cabin. The report of a kid last year that got lost in the woods and when found by a search party days later, healthy and fed, talked about the hairy "monster" that saved him. There's tons of "footage" ... like the one from a Playboy shoot in the woods, where they're about to leave and they see one right in front of them in the road.

I think the idea of the Beastie Boys in the wilderness hunting for Bigfoot is the coolest concept ever known to man. A wilderness Bigfoot safari/campout, with Beck and the Blues Explosion thrown in. It could be a big campout/jamsession to lure out the sasQUATCH! One could be Russell Simins. Actually, there's a flap of Bigfoot sightings going on in Missouri right now... who knows? Woah, I'm starting to get off track again! But anyhow, you could have the title picture be from the episode of the Six Million Dollar Man -Vs.- Bigfoot—a 7 foot tall hairy beast with white eyes and an afro that turns out to be a robot guardian of underground aliens! You gotta love the 70's.

Hell, Bigfoot is king of the underground! Bigfoot IS comin back. And everybody loves him, admit it or not. And just remember to keep moving when you're driving through the country at night. You never know when you'll be takin' a piss on the side of the road, or takin' a nap in the car, and you'll see a pair of red eyes looking at you from the forest. California has the most sightings of any state! Whatever you do, don't go camping out there. Man, I could tell you stories, but anyway... keep in touch.

Jon Keskitalo
New York, NY

Yeah. Uh, Jon? How about stamp collecting?



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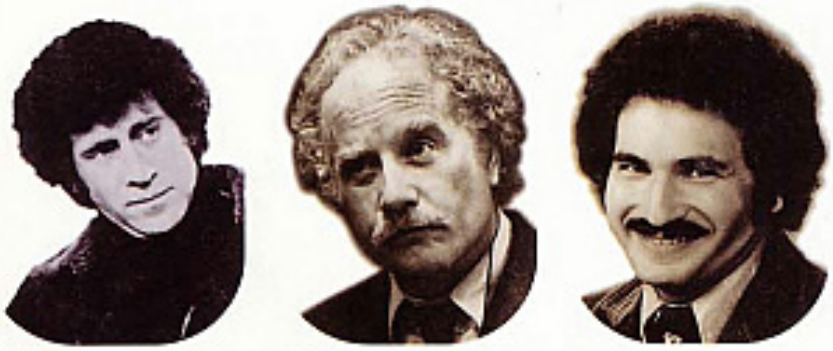
FRGSHUP

The Link To The Kink

by Joey Garfield

Whitey has a fro, but



"WHITHER THOUGH GOEST MAY YOUR HERITAGE SPROUT FORTH ATOP YOUR HEAD LIKE THE PALMS OF A TREE"
—PROVERBIANS 21:12

how did it get there ?

Afros are regular and Spanishfros are common. But take that same 'fro, put it on someone who's White and that's straight up special. The phenomenon known as the Whiteefro, or more colloquially, the Jewfro (not in any defamational way, but as a reflection of cultural pride), has a lineage spanning over time, imbedded deep in the roots of history. This is a story for those who ask 'Where did mine come from?' or 'Why can't I have one?' It all had to start somewhere and that somewhere is at the start...

A little bit after The Beginning, Cain and Abel, the two sons of Adam and Eve, were fighting each other. During the fight, Cain slew Abel. Why were they fighting? Jealousy. You ask, "What was there in biblical times to be jealous about? The only possessions anyone had back then were camels and pita." But being that man is man, they did find something to be envious about: Hair. In the ancient scripture of Josef of Harirmathea, it reads. "Of the two brothers, one shall have hair as round as the bumble of a bee, the others, flat as matzo." Thus the two brothers went down to the river, saw each other's reflection in the water, grew jealous of the other's look and fought to the death. Only it wasn't "to the death" per se because after Cain jetted back to the tent leaving his brother for dead, Abel came to. And while he was nursing his fat lip, he heard a voice say unto him:

ABEL!

What! Whoa, hit me again bro, and I'll fuc...

I AM NOT YOUR STRAIGHT HAIRED BROTHER. I AM GOD.

oh...what's up, GOD? I almost got slewed...

I KNOW. LISTEN ABEL, I WANT YOU TO TRAVEL FAR FROM HERE.

What? No way. I'm going back home to put my sandal up Cain's bu...

ABEL. WHY DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHER FIGHT?

Cause he was waiving his hair all up in my face.

DON'T YOU SEE ABEL, HIS HAIR IS STRAIGHT BUT CAN NEVER BE ROUND. YOUR HAIR IS ROUND, YET CAN NEVER BE STRAIGHT. BY LETTING ENVY SHOW YOU WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE YOU'LL NEVER REALIZE THE BEAUTY IN WHAT YOU DO HAVE. SO YOU MUST GO AND LEARN TO BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE.

All alone? The desert's a pretty big place ya know.

ABEL: I AM GOD, I GOT YOUR BACK.

But what about Cain how come he gets to stay home huh? He always gets his way.

CAIN TOO WILL BE SENT AWAY. AND HAVE GUILT ADDED TO HIS PUNISHMENT BY THINKING YOUR DEATH IS ON HIS HANDS.

So?

SO FOR YOUR ADDED PUNISHMENT, YOU WILL NEVER TAN. I HAVE SPOKEN.

So Abel with his round haired, white-skinned self set forth on his journey and GOD made it known to all that he had Abel's back. And as Abel traveled and started begating his family, he learned to get along with his kinks and let them grow large enough to shade his skin from the burn of the sun. He passed on his hairstyle to his children who passed it on to theirs, knowing that once they were proud of their hair, only then could they enjoy the hair of others.

Goest they did. There is evidence of this in the remnants of a fossilized hairpick found in the Caucus region of Asia Minor, dating 50,000 years back to the upper Paleolithic civilization. These were not cave dwellers but tent chillers who developed skills in personal adornment. The Caucasian civilization prospered and joined the Tigris and Euphrates river trade routes were they sent down their hairpicks to Mesopotamia. Froth with fros of their own and already efficient with hairpicks, the Mesopotamians took the Caucasians' picks, tied them to long sticks and invented the pitch fork...

Hundreds of years later, the Macedon area of Northern Greece was in need of a new hairstyle. Their leader, Alexander was about to conquer most civilizations in his vicinity and requested he look good in doing so. Noticing his hair was tight-knit and close to his scalp, his advisors suggested he pick it out. Pick it he did, until it was rumored that his fro could block out the sun. The Macedonians were a much feared army, and with Alexander rocking his fro they took control of the Middle East, Near East and Persia. Such a sight was Alexander conquering city-states in full effect that warnings spread miles ahead of his arrival. "Alexander the Macedonian!" was too long of a phrase to shout, so it soon got shortened to "Alexander the Mack!" Which can be loosely translated into standard English as "Alexander the Great."

The Greeks fashioned their mythological gods in the likeness of themselves, and from their artwork on vases and statues one can see Zeus has a big ass fro as did his son Hercules (Yet again, Disney has distorted history with its portrayal of a Hercules with barely a wave in his hair). In 722 B.C. The Assyrians conquered the Israelites because the Israelites had fros. Then in 200 B.C. The Romans conquered the Israelites because the Israelites had fros. In an effort to stop getting fucked with, Israelites knitted skullcaps to cover their fros. This idea seemed to work, but in order to keep their Jewfros groomed, they needed oil. Due to all the conquering going on, there was an oil shortage. Sick of flat fros under Roman rule, the Israelites took matters into their own hands: One family, the Maccabees, known for "judeanfros thick as hummus," started a revolt. While they fought, a young Israelite ran to find oil. It took him eight days to return, but miraculously, the Maccabee's falafelfros stayed pert and full of body for the duration. This historical victory is commemorated in the eight day holiday known as "Chanukah." Which translates to English as "The festival of fros." [Incidentally, because of the history of Jews' wanderings and exiles from many nations, the Jewfro is considered the most represented Whiteafro worldwide—though figures from Mainland China are still considered underreported].

Out of the Middle Ages sprung the Byzantine era. The Byzantines ruled from the top of the Mediterranean Sea to the bottom of the Black Sea in the seventh through to the ninth century A.D. The reign of the Byzantifro was so wide and longlasting and so chock full of fros that there are remnants of it's influence past the Alps into the Slavic region of Bohemia (now Czechoslovakia), and even sported by the Celts (Ireland/ Britain), whose fros came out fiery red.

Though the Whiteafro flourished in and out of history, nowhere was it dealt as brutal a blow as the Renaissance period in Europe. The root of Renaissance individualism is the notion that each man should freely and harmoniously develop all styles of his hair. Yet as time progressed, it became fashionable to repress one's hair to "fit" in to the more "developed" Europe. The fifteenth century European monarchies crushed the idea altogether that anyone resembling the queen would have hair any way but straight. The artists of that time would paint and sculpt their subjects with straight hair. Soon, with no image of itself represented, the Whiteafro lost its pride.

By the early Twentieth century, the Whiteafro had almost vanished. Harpo Marx, a lone practitioner, had to travel with his in a case. Only when modern scientist started to uncover valuable data on gene pools and chromosome research did the United States catch up to the Whiteafro phenomenom. In 1950, the University of Chicago Biogenetics Research Lab issued this statement:

"If the mother's father is bald, then her child will inherit the bald gene code. In contrast, if the father's mother has a fro [discounting perms], then the child will automatically inherit the kink gene code."

In the Nineteen-sixties, America was in an internal war with itself and the straight path, politically, economically and hair stylistically, was at a peak. But the youth movements of the Sixties looked inward for answers and began mass rallying. The slogan "Grow your hair" became an ultimate expression of anti-conformist rebellion. In an effort to confuse the government, many shouted the motto: "Hell no we won't Fro!" so they couldn't actually be arrested. Singer Bob Dylan, with his politically charged Jewfro, caught the attention of the youth and more and more people let their heads bloom forth with their heritage. Musicians like Noel Redding [Britfro], Art Garfunkel [Jewfro], and Tom Jones [Welsh Rarefro] reflected their hair in their music. Others, such as Eric Clapton, were so clearly envious that they underwent dubious perm jobs for which they are still apologizing ("To fekeith the fro is like unto hairosy," said Curly McNeal). Strangely, most of them claimed to be emulating Jimi Hendrix, who tended to straighten his hair. Nevertheless, Whiteafros served as an announcement to the world that they were a part of something much larger and funkier, kinkier and chunkier.

That something was the Seventies. Known for the largest amalgamation of fros in one decade, the Nineteen Seventies will go down in the annals of hairstory as "L'Age D'Or De'Fro" (or for those of us that don't speak Apostrophes, "The Golden Age of Fros"). What was looked on as experimentation in the Sixties became accepted, even promoted, lifestyle in the Seventies.

Many icons stood out in their actions to support their fros. Rumored to be so dense it could sink like a stone in water, Lee Oscar of WAR paid a tribute to his fro (Nederfro) in a song aptly named "Low Rider." Though Oscar waved his banner of hair proudly, he was still no match for Art Garfunkel's "Killa Vanilla," which developed increasing prominence in direct contrast to Garfunkel's career. The development of his hairstyle as relived in Carnal Knowledge, is an excellent primer to cultivation. Don Henley saw his fro as a symbol of freedom [Calfro] and named his band The Eagles in honor of it. Barbra Streisand fronted it. As the decade matured, the group Boston [Beanfro] represented with both drummer Sib Hashian [mondofro] and guitarist Bradley Delp [controlfro]. Whiteafros were pumping out faster than a Play Dough barbershop set.

The Whiteafro, in all its fuzzy glory, opened the doors for disco, jazz fusion, roller-skates, hot tubs, and drugs. Smoking marijuana, it was discovered, made hair grow faster and fuller. Freaking, streaking, and peeking were acceptable forms of expression. After hundreds of years in obscurity, the whiteafro phenomenon hit the mainstream. Hairpick sales were up. Way up. Those with fros were boldly showing the country that they had the will, determination, and hairspray to control their own destinies. The whiteafro became less of a hairstyle and more of a hairvibe. Perhaps Lindsay Buckingham of Fleetwood Mac put the Whiteafro of the Seventies in perspective best by stating simply, "Fro your own way."

As television in the Seventies became more omnipresent, so did the power of the image. Try as this media might to ignore the whiteafro's dominance, there where those who

fought from within. On his TV show Welcome Back, Kotter, Gabe Kaplan's fro was an influence both in the classroom set (prompting Arnold Horshack and Juan Epstein to both let fly) and outside in America's living rooms. Gabe Kaplan's show served as a reflection of the times, and what was seen was the fro. The word 'Sweathog' is practically synonymous with the word 'Whiteafro.' The Sweathogs' manner and style also epitomized the big fro vibe (let's not forget Washington in the house) and in order to be one, you had to have one (Walt Travolta-as-Barbarino tried his best). That sentiment was felt nationwide. Gabe's fro peaked out of the confines of television's academia and into nationwide cult status (whatever that means—Ed.). Other acts of subtle solidarity emerged across the TV nation by such revolutionaries as: Danny Most, Three's Company's Mrs. Roper, and the late PBS painter Bob Ross.

Sports figures also stepped up to the plate. In his early years as a New York Knick, Phil Jackson's fro was large'n'in charge and Phil transferred that largeness to his game. The result brought the New York Knicks two NBA championships in '70 and '73. Riding that wave of victory, the Knicks administration were rumored to have considered changing the name to the New York Kinks. Controversial and cantankerous tennis champ John MacEnroe also wore his kinks like a crown—and made the oversize headband a fashion statement. Aerobics pioneer Richard Simmons was in the house. Undefeated pro wrestler Andre the Giant, likewise let the brothers and sisters know he too was part of the fight to break through America's oppressive hair bans.

The influence was pervasive, as confirmed by this testemonial of one child of the 70's, Adam Lowy: "The first time I realized the power of my fro was in second grade during picture day. I had my green pick with me, so I sat in the back of the class and picked it and picked it and picked it all morning until it was my turn. When the pictures came back, I had picked my fro right out of the frame."

Today, with the advancement of Biogenetics studies, fro replication is not far away. The biological make-up of sheep's hair is not that different from the make-up of a white guy's Whiteafro. Soon, one will be able to determine whether an unborn child will have lifelong kinks or not. These tools should not be handled lightly. If put in the wrong hands this could be a recipe for disaster. The long and turbulent path the kink has taken can very easily wind back into its own dark ages. Yet the fro flag must fly.

In the midst, one man has been chosen as the future leader. That man is twenty-year-old Southern California dude and star of NBC's Saved By the Bell: Dustin "Screech" Diamond. The dawn of a new era is here. Because when it comes to the Whiteafro, Dustin has plans:

"I want to pick it as far as it can go and do my ping walk so that my fro will bounce forward and hit the sidewalk and then bounce backward and hit the sidewalk behind me. I'm also going to slick down the back, sides and top but leave the corners big and make Mickey Mouse ears. It's not at the potential it could be, 'cause the character can't go there. [They] wouldn't let me grow it out 'cause Screech doesn't really call for it.

"I have a band Mushpot and I wear a Speedo on my head and I put my hair through the holes in the top and I look like a carrot. I play bass, so I want it out of my way.

"I want to open my own food chain where everyone who serves you has fros and it'll be called FROS N' YOGURT, you know like frozen yogurt.

Wouldn't they have to wear hair nets?

Noooo, that'll take away from them!

But there are health codes.

Well, their hair's gotta be taken good care of.

Let's talk maintenance.

Well, curly hair dries out a lot. I use moisturizer shampoo and conditioner and then just let it go. There are no products in it.

Do you use a pick?

Only when I dress to impress

Did you ever want straight hair?

No.

Does it have a nickname?

Not really.

Who are some of your hair idols?

Ronald McDonald and Bozo. There is this cartoon called the Hair Bear Bunch, these three bears are like the Three Stooges. The biggest bear has huge hair.

Ever any situations dealing with wind resistance?

Heck yeah. When I drive, I can stick my head out the window and it'll turn my car.

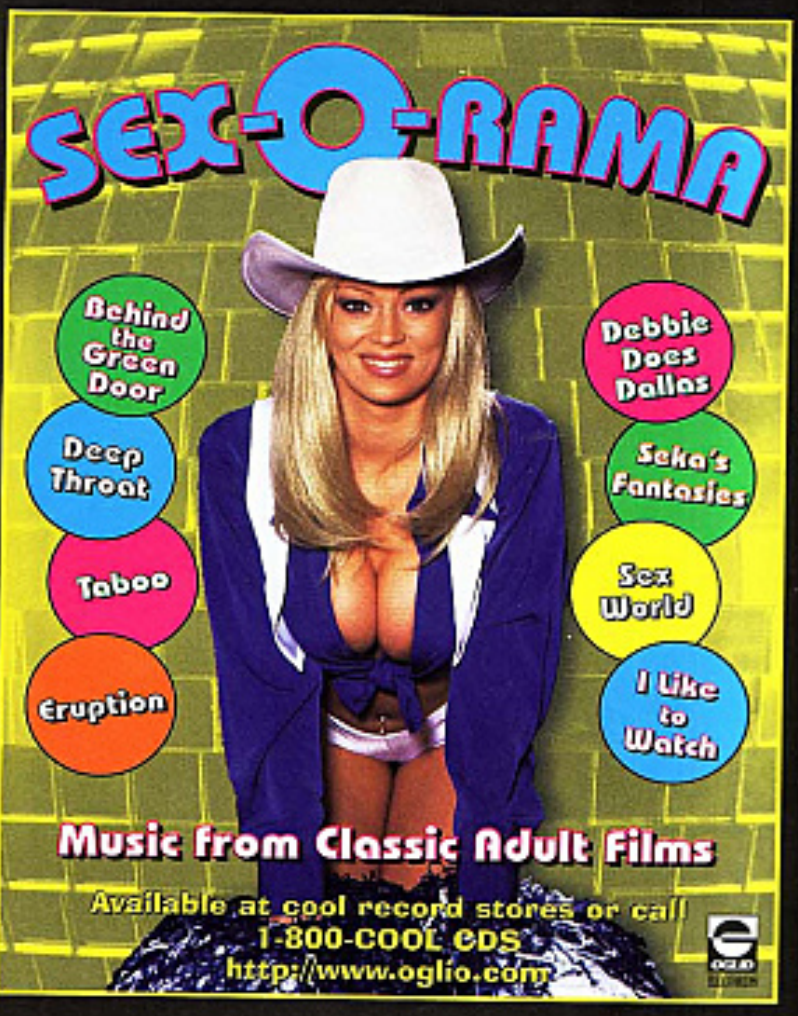
What's your advice to others who have potential but haven't gone for the fro yet?

Hang in there. Everyone has the annoying point where it's in the middle and it's tangled. I like it 'cause I can walk into the room and make everyone laugh. That's powerful.

Where's the future of the fro?

I think people are not thinking about it, with hairstyles and clothing styles trying to be soo0 different. I like it sitting up top. It's wacky and ridiculous. I want to enter a room and have my hair enter after me and swing it around like a ball and chain.

HE HAS SPOKEN. Now that you know the history and have become acquainted with the influential past the Whiteafro has participated in, make it so with your own. The only way to go is bigger and fuller. It is up to you to look forward and find it within yourself to see the Whiteafro remain prominent into the next millenium and bring full circle, The Link to the Kink.



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Know Your Chicken

Supergrass check in on the condition of Kenny Rogers' Roasters

Special consumer report prepared for GR by Jay W. Babcock Photos by Patrick Simpson

"Whatever field of business you're in, it's always a very special honor to be voted the best by the public," says entertainer Kenny Rogers, who's picked up 11 People's Choice Awards, three Grammys, 18 American Music Awards, five Country Music Association awards and one Horatio Alger. Arguably just as honorable, his Kenny Rogers Roosters restaurant chain, made up of 259 stores in 37 states and 15 countries, has racked up consecutive "Number One Chicken Restaurant Chain" honors from the Restaurants & Institutions' Annual America's Choice in Chains Awards.

"Winning the 'People's Choice Award' was a great honor because the listeners were telling me they liked my songs," says Mr. Rogers on the Roosters website (www.roosters.com). "It's just as rewarding to win the same type of praise in the restaurant business, knowing it was our guests who voted for us as number one chicken chain."

Why then would Kenny Rogers seek to be the top rooster of the fast-food barnyard? (rather than vest himself in, say, a self-aggrandizing amusement park like frequent collaborator Dolly Parton's Dollywood)? The answer is simple. "When you travel as much as I do, it's hard to find a good place to eat," Kenny explains. "That's why I decided to open my own restaurants with homemade recipes that are as good, as they are good for you." In other words, Kenny just needed a decent place to get himself some grub. We'll buy that.

To check out what all the crowing was about, Grand Royal sent your humble correspondent to the local Kenny Rogers Roosters, located on Highland Avenue in the heart of Hollywood's tourist trap zone. Beneath the Roosters sign reading "ONE WHOLE CHICKEN FOR A $1.00 W/ PURCHASE MEAL (sic)," we met the members of international pop music sensations Supergrass-Gaz, Danny, and Mickey for a poultry tasting mission.

Why Supergrass? As it happens, Oxford, England's Supergrass are fans of Kenny Rogers. At least, they cover one of his first hits, "Just Checked In To See (What Condition My Condition Was In)" by Kenny Rogers and the First Edition on one of the British b-sides to the single for "Alright." "Condition" is also a staple of the Grass's live show, its prog-like demands allowing them to stretch their, ahem, chicken legs.

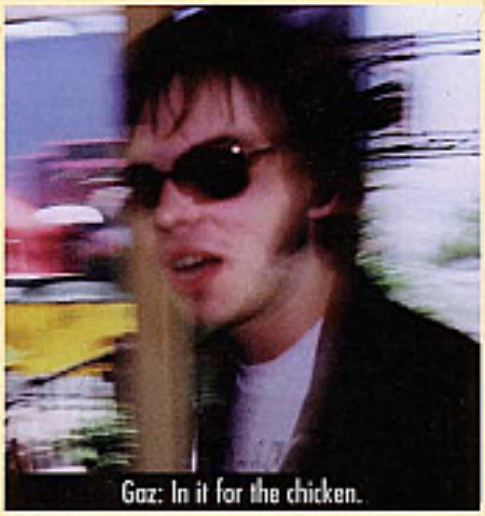
"It's from his psychedelic days," lead singer Gaz offered, without acknowledging the possible influence of another First Edition hit, "Something's Burning" (which features the perhaps prescient lines "Don't count your chickens/Cuz they're never gonna hatch."), covered by Madchester's Stone Roses on the B-side to their 1990 single, "One Love."

"There's a really crazy hippy guy in Oxford who has the largest psychedelic record collection in England, actually," said Gaz, explaining how they heard "Condition."

"He's a regular town celebrity," Mickey chimed in.

"He'd invite us around to his house," Gaz continued, "and play us loads of really great stuff. We met him at some of our first gigs in Oxford. He used to support us a little bit, do

Anatomy of a Lunch Tray



Gaz: In it for the chicken.

poetry before we'd come on."

"We were only about 15 at that time," Danny recalled.

"He'd always try to burn joints off us," Gaz added, "so we'd lick them before we passed on to him."

Yes, well, there's doobies and then there's chicken. The award-winning Rooster concept is a simple one: Satisfy the adults with low prices (Turkey Feast Meal, $23.99) and fast cafeteria-style service, while entertaining the kids with the firepit (children can't seem to get enough of fat dripping off a twirling chicken into flames, though though the sight may pale next to watching the butcher at Fuddrucker's grind beef into hamburger).

The secret to Roosters' taste, according to Mr. Rogers, is that "We take the freshest chickens (provided by Tyson foods, the famous Arkansas-based chicken factory farm) and marinate them in natural citrus, herbs, and spices. Then we slowly (roast) them (on a rotisserie) over a hardwood fire so hot that the fat goes out while all the wood roasted flavor is sealed right in (unless you purchase your Roosters food from one of the 5400 hotels that have recently signed up to offer Rogers Roosters Express, which incorporates the technological wonder TurboChef to drastically cut cooking time; for example, TurboChef allows an 18-ounce beef tenderloin to be cooked in 180 seconds while, according to its manufacturer, "maintaining the same quality levels and food flavor, texture and appearance as those from other cooking platforms.")" Whether your Roosters meat is cooked with wood or a TurboChef, the result, Mr. Rogers promises, is "a superb tasting chicken with less sodium, fat, and calories than its fried counterpart."

KRR isn't just about chicken, though—with the recent addition of Homestyle Beef Entrees and Honey Bourbon Baby Back Ribs, the chain has become a veritable Palace of Meat (Mike D. notes that the 6th ave, KFC locale has strayed even farther from the true chicken game with pizza, frozen yogurt, etc.) Herbivores are advised to stick to the Caesar's Salad and the tasty 'n' tangy Tomato, Cucumber & Onion Salad that is served in a small plastic bucket resembling a recycled margarine tub.

Kenny himself wasn't in the house (perhaps Mr. Rogers was busy tolling around Athens, GA with wife No. 5 in his Blazer 4x4 harassing KRR employees like he does in his TV commercials). Nevertheless, His presence was ubiquitous, thanks to some strategically positioned portraits and two closed-circuit 17-inch monitors cycling through a mix of videos by newcomers (Tracy Lawrence, BR-549, etc.) and vintage Kenny performances like "Don't Fall In Love With A Dreamer," "Coward Of The County," "Lucille," "Lady," "You Decorated My Life" and "Islands in the Stream" (with Dolly Parton).

Rather than the expected Kenny devotees, the Highland location firepit also attracts a motley collection of would-be Geddys and Yngwies cutting class from the Musicians Institute (home of GIT; see GR #2, p. 48) around the corner. One of these wheedlers claimed that sometimes you can see the ghost of Randy Rhodes in the smoke slowly wafting upward off the roasting chicken.

As I looked for the face of Mr. Rhodes, Supergrass kept aboard the KRR gravy train. Gaz, Mickey and Danny uniformly declined the pleasures of the succulent chicken breast that is KRR's pride and joy,

Mickey checks the specials.

opting instead for another of our feathery friends: the turkey.

The array of side dishes that accompany the Turkey Breast Sandwich Combo ($4.99) left the trio puzzling for several minutes over their choices. These included the ubiquitous BBQ Baked Beans, a frighteningly gooey Macaroni & Cheese, and the conceptually bizarre Garlic Parsley. Finally, they opted for the robust Cornbread Stuffing and over-creamy Creamy Spinach.

We settled down to dine across from the firepit (still eager to witness the beneficent apparition of Randy Rhodes), and these young lads from Oxford town delved into their meals with a remarkable enthusiasm. As if on cue, Kenny's classic "The Gambler" came on the closed-circuit TV.

"So," I asked the threesome, "Have they shown the 'Gambler' TV movies on the BBC?"

Blank stares.

"CBS made five movies based on the 'Gambler' song..."

Blank stares.

"You do know that one, right?"

...

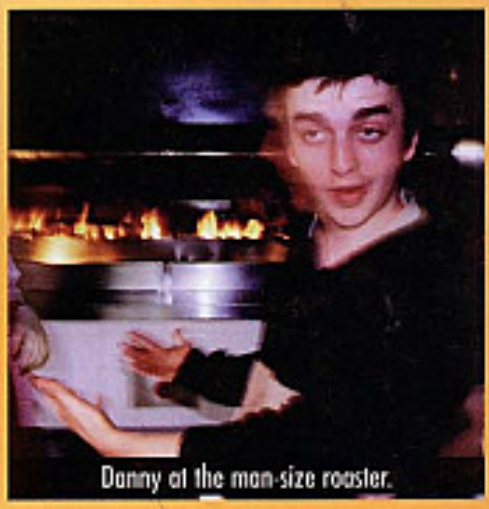
"'Know when to fold 'em...'" Gaz sings, philosophically, chewing on one of Kenny's Famous Muffins. "That's quite cool, now."

A uniformed Roosters staffer interrupted to cheerily announce "We have some samples here for everyone," and passed out six shot glass-size cups of a yellowish-brown coagulation. "It's called butternut squash."

Apparently, KRR continuously test their formula as well as new recipes. But, though you might reasonably infer that items like "Kenny's Apple and/Cherry Cobblers" (which are excellent and cost a mere 99c) and the aforementioned "Kenny's Famous Muffins" (39c) are made from Rogers family recipes, the truth is that Kenny has only leant his name and likeness to the chain, though Randy Rogers (Kenny's brother and chief publicist for Roosters) claims that Kenny "loves to cook. He calls himself an an executive chef... I was in Kenny's kitchen the other day and he was saying 'Got this,got this' and I asked 'Why are I doing this?' and he said he was 'the executive chef.'"

In fact, Kenny Rogers owns but a mere 15% stake in Florida-based Kenny Rogers Roosters chain; The majority shareholder is Berjaya Group Berhad, a multinational corporation based in Malaysia. The chain was founded in 1991 by former Kentucky state governor John Y. Brown, Jr.-the same John Y. Brown, Jr. who once owned the primary provider of fried chicken in this country, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and made KFC a household acronym.

Chicken is tough business. Despite Kenny's accolades, he faces stern competition from the Boston Market (nee' Boston Chicken) corporation, 1042 outlets strong, not to mention El Pollo Loco ("The Crazy Chicken"), upstart Koo Koo Roo, the Chicken on Fire Thai food chain, equally celebrated poultry lover Muhammad Ali's Rotisserie Chicken, old rivals Roy Rogers (no relation!) and the Colonel (KFC, a



Danny at the man-size rooster.

reconfigured Kentucky Fried Chicken) as well as a variety of other regional quick service poultry places.

Supergrass refused to touch the on-the-house butternut squash (Your reviewer ate three cups' worth), and in the end, spent few words deciding their unbiased opinion of Kenny's grub.

"It's disgusting," says Gaz. "Am I allowed to smoke in here?"

Trying to be more helpful, Mickey offers: "I don't know if this turkey was processed right. It has sort of a machine-covered taste."

Summing the whole experience up, Danny revealed, "Secretly-we're not really into Kenny Rogers."

Next issue: Sly Stone reviews Sly Stallone's Planet Hollywood.

Ratings

Food Item	Flavor	Texture	Price	Appearance	Overall Rating
Chicken					
Butternut Squash					
Potatoes					
Bread					
Beverage					

BREAST = Excellent

LEG = Good

WING = OK

LIVER = Gross

GIZZARD = Wretched

Legends Of Chicken

Roy Rogers
Trigger Man

Americans can swallow tons of crap over dozens of years without ever throwing up or even realizing they've been poisoned. Nothing illustrates this point better than the career of Roy Rogers (nee Leonard Sly), the Singing Cowboy of the Wild Frontier. Starting as an original member of the fake cowboy band the Sons of Pioneers (not to be confused with Sons of Slaves or Sons of Natives Americans), Roy Rogers soon weaseled his way into the American consciousness through movies, radio shows, and television, being crowned 'King of the Cowboys' in 1943 by his movie studio. With his wife Dale, his horse Trigger, and a slew of one dimensional side kicks, Roy Rogers ruled America's box office with an iron spur—and licensing his name on any product possible—until being outmoded by 50s and 60s cowboy stars like Jack Palance and Clint Eastwood.

Since losing his movie and television audience, the tentacles of the Roy Rogers Empire have stretched far and wide in search of dollars. The Roy Rogers fast food chain provides citizens with hamburgers and fried chicken of reliable mediocrity—practically the American credo.

Then there's the Roy Rogers Museum in Victorville, California (on Highway 15 between Las Vegas and L.A.), a creepy collection of dead animals, old shotguns, and commemorative plates, all available in the gift shop for purchase—except for the stuffed carcass of Trigger - he stays.

But the apex of the Rogers stronghold is the greatest monstrosity to hit the California High Desert Area since the first wave of Spanish Conquistadors - RogersDale, U.S.A., a theme mall based on the "Traditional Values of the Wild West." Currently under construction, tourists can blow dollars while learning family values through "a variety of restaurants, specialty shops, a Western Sidekick Walk of Fame, and a non-denominational chapel for prayer, medication, and many happy weddings." (Unfortunately, RogersDale will not be equipped with the whorehouses, racist worker exploitation, crime, lynchings, or the stealing of land from Indians and Mexicans that are also a part of "our Western Heritage", but many of those things still are available in nearby Nevada.)

Future plans also include a Roy Rogers Cartoon, unlimited "Limited edition" belt buckles, shotguns, hummels, and other assorted junk items.Yet another new book by Roy's prolific wife Dale Evans called "Our Values, Stories and Wisdom" uses the examples of English Christian settlers to help the troubled youth of America deal with a lack of values in their lives. Truly an American Legend, Roy Rogers has dedicated his life to truth, justice, and the most American thing of all: cashing in on worthless crap. God bless us all.

—Mark Driver

Muhammad Ali Rotisserie Chicken

"We took a few cups of love, one teaspoon of patience, one teaspoon of generosity, and one pint of kindness. Then he mixed it up, spread it over the span of a life time, and served it to each deserving person he met." So wrote Muhammad Ali, supposedly, on the menus for his Muhammad Ali's Rotisserie Chicken restaurants (talking about himself?), which debuted in 1994 with locations in Silver Spring, Maryland, his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, and ... where else? The enigma remains, because in the tough competitive climate of the rotisserie chicken market, Ali's chain seems to have vanished almost without a trace. The Silver Spring outlet is gone, no one in Louisville seems to know about it, and GR's investigative team has turned up nothing but a '95 vintage take out menu to prove the chain ever existed.

The menu, emboldened by a logo featuring a butterfly (floats like...) a bee (stings like...) and a rising sun, sets our ambitious goals: "At Muhammad Ali Rotisserie Chicken, we hope to serve our customers with the excellence, generosity, and care which Muhammad Ali has demonstrated in his life." This is followed by a checklist manifesto of sorts:

*Providing exceptional, nutritional, affordable food in an inviting atmosphere

*Always meeting or exceeding our customers' desires

*Working with honesty, dedication, and results.

And finally: "Come Eat Like A Champ."

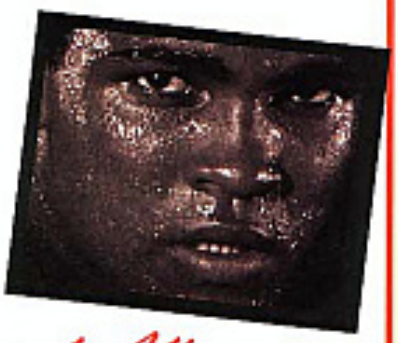
Based closer to Southern soul food cuisine than any other rotisserie chain, the menu offers, along with a wide variety of chicken options, mashed potatoes and gravy, rice pilaf, macaroni & cheese, collard greens, herbed corn, Louisville baked beans, honeyed Carolina yams, butternut squash, garlic parsley potatoes (hey, sounds like Kenny bit on Ali's recipe!) stewed tomatoes and zucchini, stuffing, mama's cornbread, and custard bean pies. Sounds like something for everyone to us. And all of it "just like mama used to make."

Not only that, but if you made it in before March 30, 1995 (oh, for a time machine!) you could've gotten a "free original signed photo of the champ" and certificate of authenticity with purchase of the 3 Whole Rotisserie Chicken Ali Value Meal (priced at $33.95). Granted, that's a lotta bird to eat, but hey, you got to take The Greatest home for inspiration.

So what happened? Where did Chicken Ali go? We'd love to think that the Thrills In Manila, the originator of the Rope-A-Dope, withered at competition from lightweights like Roy and Kenny. Let's hope he just lost interest.

Maybe the Ali revival arrived a year too late.

—E.G.



– Muhammad Ali –

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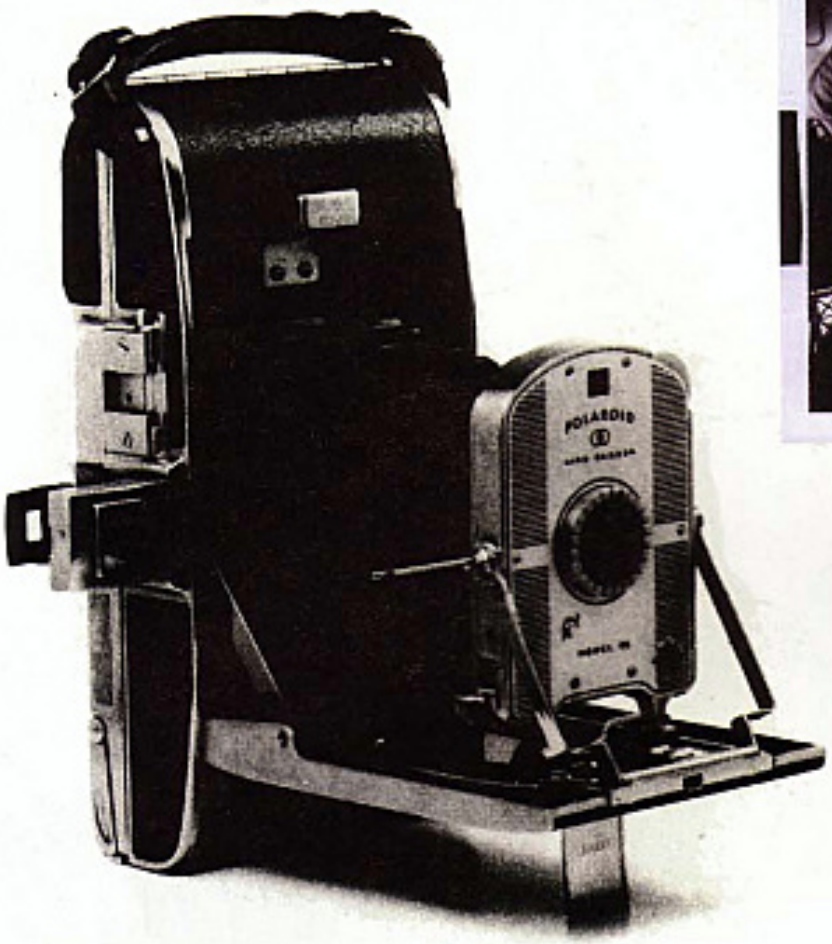
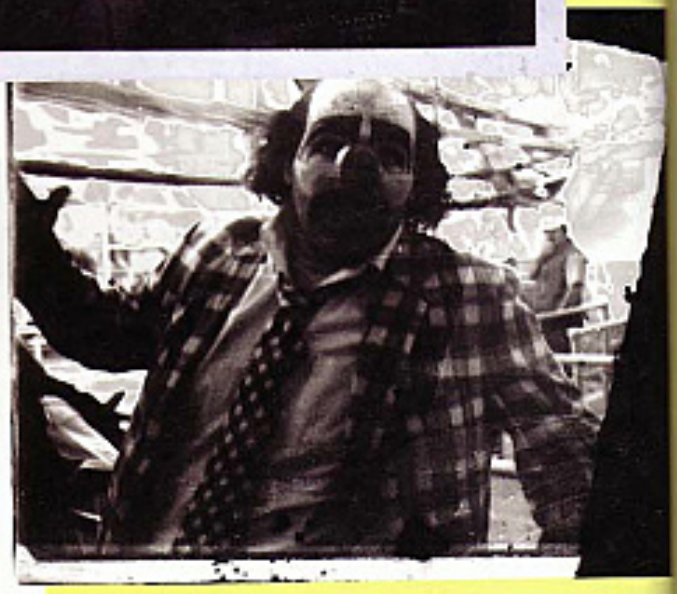




THE POLAROID LAND CAMERA

BY RYZE

Back in 1946 while holding a second job as an overnight dispatcher at an oil company, my grandfather befriended the man who pioneered the technology I've been addicted to for the last three years.

Each time after settling his fuel bill, Dr. Edwin Land would hang out for as long as it took to eat the Monte Cristo sandwich he usually brought with him, and talk with whomever was operating the desk. On one of these late night snack breaks, Dr. Land got to chattering about a new camera he was inventing, that would develop a picture seconds after you snapped the shutter release. He had taken a liking to my grandfather, and being confident that the camera would be a success, he told him that if he had any money stashed away, to invest it and get in on the ground floor. Sold on the idea, but broke at the time, my grandfather had to pass on the opportunity. He later went on to start his own company dealing in religious gift items often referred to as "junk for Jesus" by the rest of the family. Dr. Land went on to found the Polaroid Corporation.

Not only was Dr. Land's camera a smash success, it revolutionized picture-taking. Instant photography meant that if you could wait 30 seconds, you could be a start-to-finish photographer. Within a few years after the debut of the Polaroid, just about every household had one, which is why these days Land Cameras are more popular than the infamous Dogs Playing Poker portrait at yard sales/ flea markets/ thrift stores everywhere. I came across my first Land Camera at a thrift, and ten

•1934: Nov. 30th. Land-Wheelwright Labs accepts first major contract to use Polaroid plastic glare-reducing polarization sheets, from Eastman Kodak.
•1937: Aug. 10th. Polaroid Corporation is formed, backed by bigtime Wall Street moolah.
•1938: Polaroid undergoes first direct marketing, of Polaroid desk lamps.
•Early '40s: US Defense Dept. latches onto Vectography, a Land process originally designed for 3-D movie watching, to use in strategic reconnaissance.
•1947: Feb. 21st. Edwin Land publicly

bucks later, I was out the door with a friend for life. If you encounter a high price stickler, my advice is to just lie. Something along the lines of "Hey knucklehead, I called Polaroid and not only can you not get the film for these anymore, but they haven't made those batteries in over 20 years!"

The first thing you're gonna need is one of those batteries. No problem. Open the battery compartment door on the back of the camera and there you will find the battery ID number. Just call 1-800-343-5000 and the gregarious folks at Polaroid customer service (open 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) will sell and ship you a battery for $7. The juice should last you about a year or so. If you or someone you know is electronically inclined, it's also possible to change the connections so they can accept more readily available batteries—this can save you a hassle if the batteries are on backorder, or if for some reason down the line they decide to stop making them (if you do the McGyver route and rig-it-yourself, just remember it's important to match the voltage).

The plastic lens on a Land Camera can give you sharpness and detail as good if not better than 35mm lenses. Right around the lens is a lighten/darken control that lets you adjust the brightness of your pictures. Land Cameras are a notoriously trial-and-error deal, so if your first shot sucks, make an adjustment and go at it again. It takes a few packs of film to get the hang of it, but then you're hooked. The Land Camera also has film speed controls that give you a choice of aperture sizes. Don't bother trying to figure out what film speed you should be, because it's outdated information. All you have to know is big hole for color film, little hole for black and white.

Look in the lens when you switch back and forth and you'll see the aperture change. The battery is what powers the electric eye, located to the right of the lens. It tells the shutter to close when enough light enters, which is important when you're shooting in low light situations. If you want a longer exposure, all you have to do is hold your finger over the electric eye while taking the picture. I highly recommend playing with this technique.

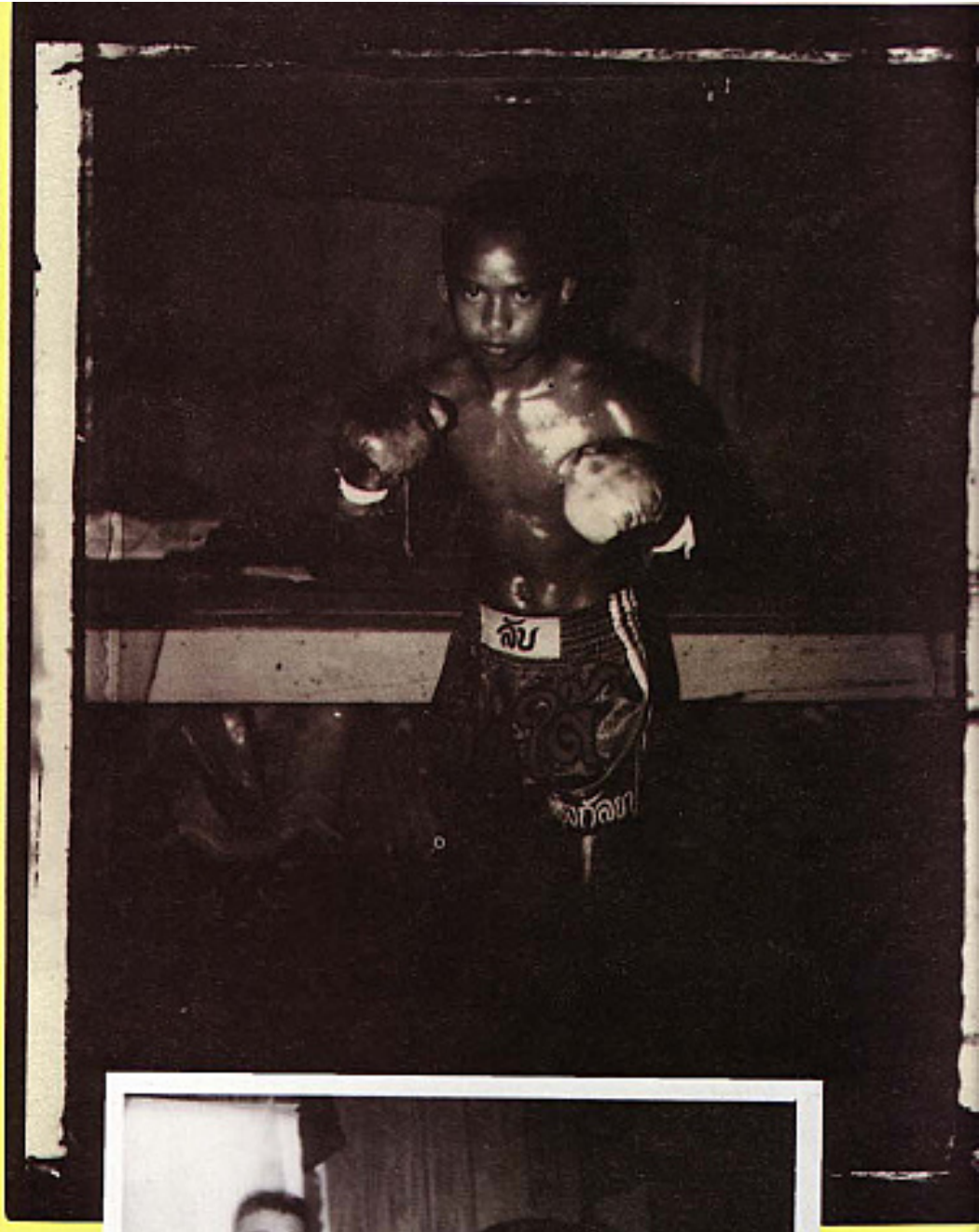


PHOTO EDITOR'S NOTE: POLAROIDS ON PGS. 26-28 BY RYZE, SCOTT HENRIKSEN, WYATT TROLL, TOBIN YELLAND

CINEMATOGRAPHER SCOTT HENRIKSEN'S SHOTS COME FROM A SHOEBOX FULL OF POLAROID LIGHTING TESTS FROM VARIOUS COMMERCIAL PROJECTS AND WORLD TRAVELS. LIKEWISE, TROLL AND YELLAND BRING POLAROID CAMERAS INTO THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE WORLD IN AN EFFORT TO NOT ONLY TAKE A SOUL, BUT TO GIVE A PICTURE IN RETURN.

demonstrates his instant picture camera at the Optical Society of America meeting.
•1948: The first Polaroid instant camera, the Model 95, weighs four pounds, produces sepia-toned shots, and is available at a list price of $89.75.
•1950: Type 41 Black and White instant Polaroid film is made available.
•Early 50s: Polaroid is one of the first network TV sponsors, demonstrated on the Tonight Show with Steve Allen.
•1953: Land invents a ultraviolet microscope, for use in cancer research. Polaroid corp. also produces millions of cardboard 3D glasses for movie watching.
•1954: The Polaroid Model 80 "Highlander" camera is introduced, priced at a more moderate $59.95.

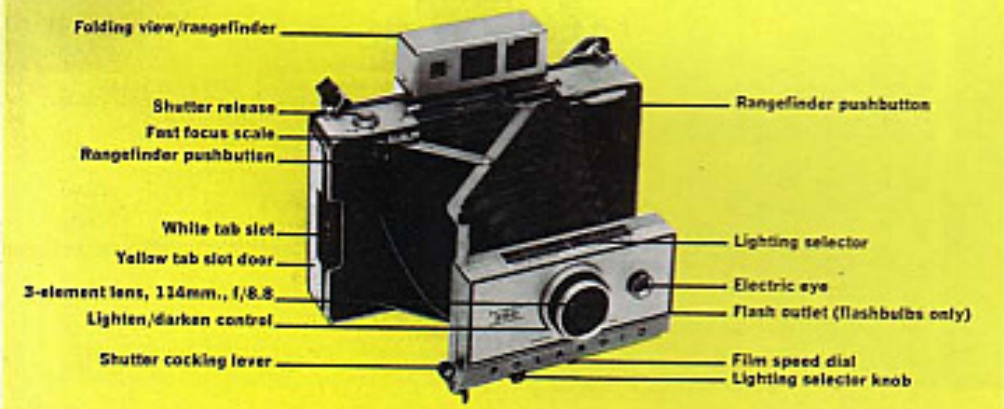
Once you obtain and install the battery and get familiar with the camera, you're going to need some film. Folding Land Cameras take 3 1/4 x 4 1/4 pack film. If you didn't already know, all Polaroid films have their own number. For color, there's 108, 669, Polacolor 100, and the sometimes tough to find version made by Fuji. If black and white is your shit, there's 667 and 665 (the latter actually gives you a negative you can treat and reprint from). Just be sure not to get the 600 film that goes into Polaroid Spectras by accident.

If you call Polaroid, they'll send you a Xerox copy of the manual that goes to the specific model of Land Camera you have, although often the manual can be found in the inside clip of the camera's protective cover. Twenty-seven different models of the Folding Land Camera were made between 1963 and 1971 which take the 3 1/4 x 4 1/4 pack film. All have plastic lenses except two, the 180 and the 195. These models have high quality glass 4 x 5 lenses, with f-stop and shutter speeds. They are rare and can run anywhere from $200 to $400 at a camera store. Needless to say, if you ever come across one of these at a yard sale for $2, Yo.

One of the best things I've found about Folding Land Cameras is they're not threatening. When you brandish a 35mm camera, people tend to get suspicious, scared they might wind up on the front page of some newspaper looking stupid. Pull out a classic Polaroid with accordian-style bellows and the intimidating "Why are you taking my picture?" inquiries quickly melt to "Wow, nice camera. Does it work? Take my picture..." So if you're timid about approaching subjects you want to photograph in the street, the folding Land Camera can do the same thing for your pictures that a dog can do for a lonely guy.

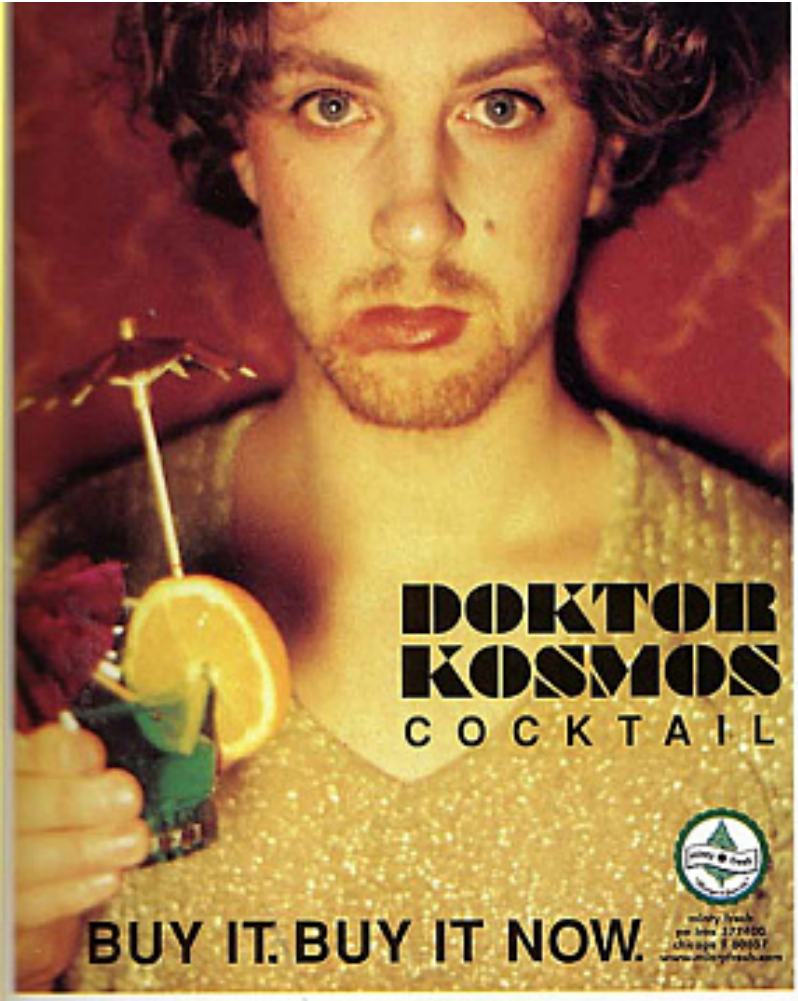
If you have any additional questions about the folding Land Camera or problems with one you already have, write to me care of Grand Royal. I'd be happy to help anyone eager to pursue an addiction to the best camera Polaroid ever made.

KNOW YOUR CAMERA



•mid-50s: Land participates in President Eisenhower's science advisory committee, which leads to the Cold War essential U-2 spy plane.

•1955: Polaroid announces availability of 60-second instant slides.
•1956: Dec 31st, the millionth Polaroid camera, a model 95A "Speedliner" is sold in South Orange, NJ.
•1958: 4" x 5" pack film holders, for professional use with either Type 52, or Type 55 P/N (reusable negative), are made available. 3000 ASA films follow the next year. Pack film could be removed and developed outside the camera, then peeled open.



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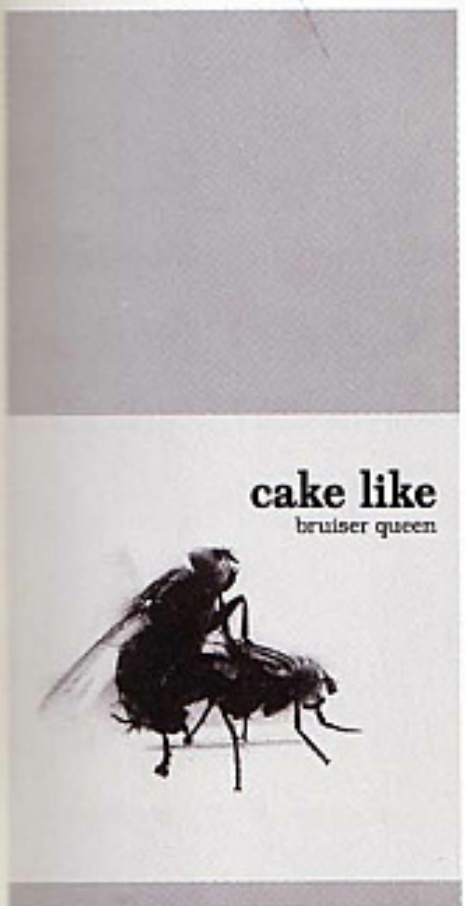
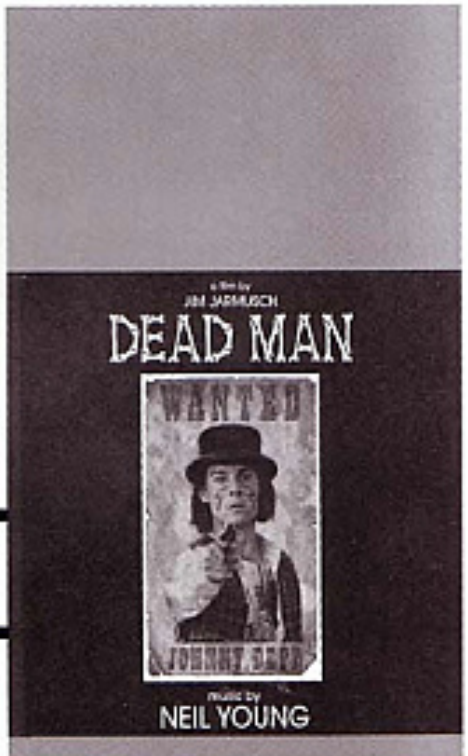


cake like
"bruiser queen"

Jonathan Richman
"Surrender to Jonathan"



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Dead Man Soundtrack

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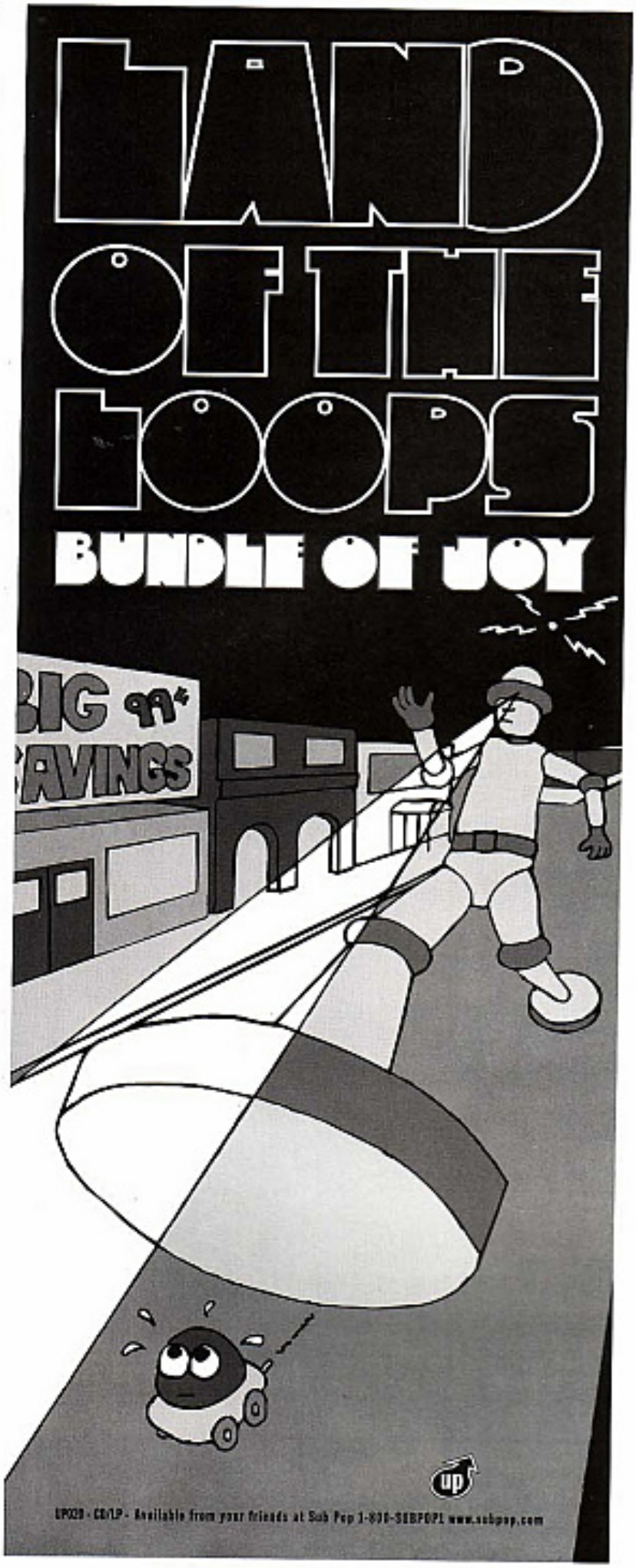
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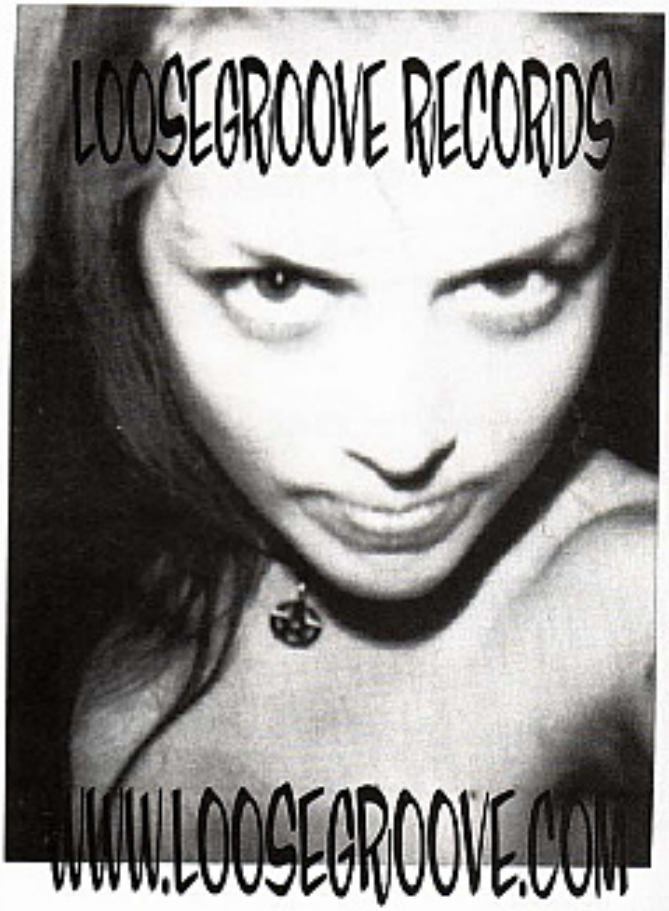
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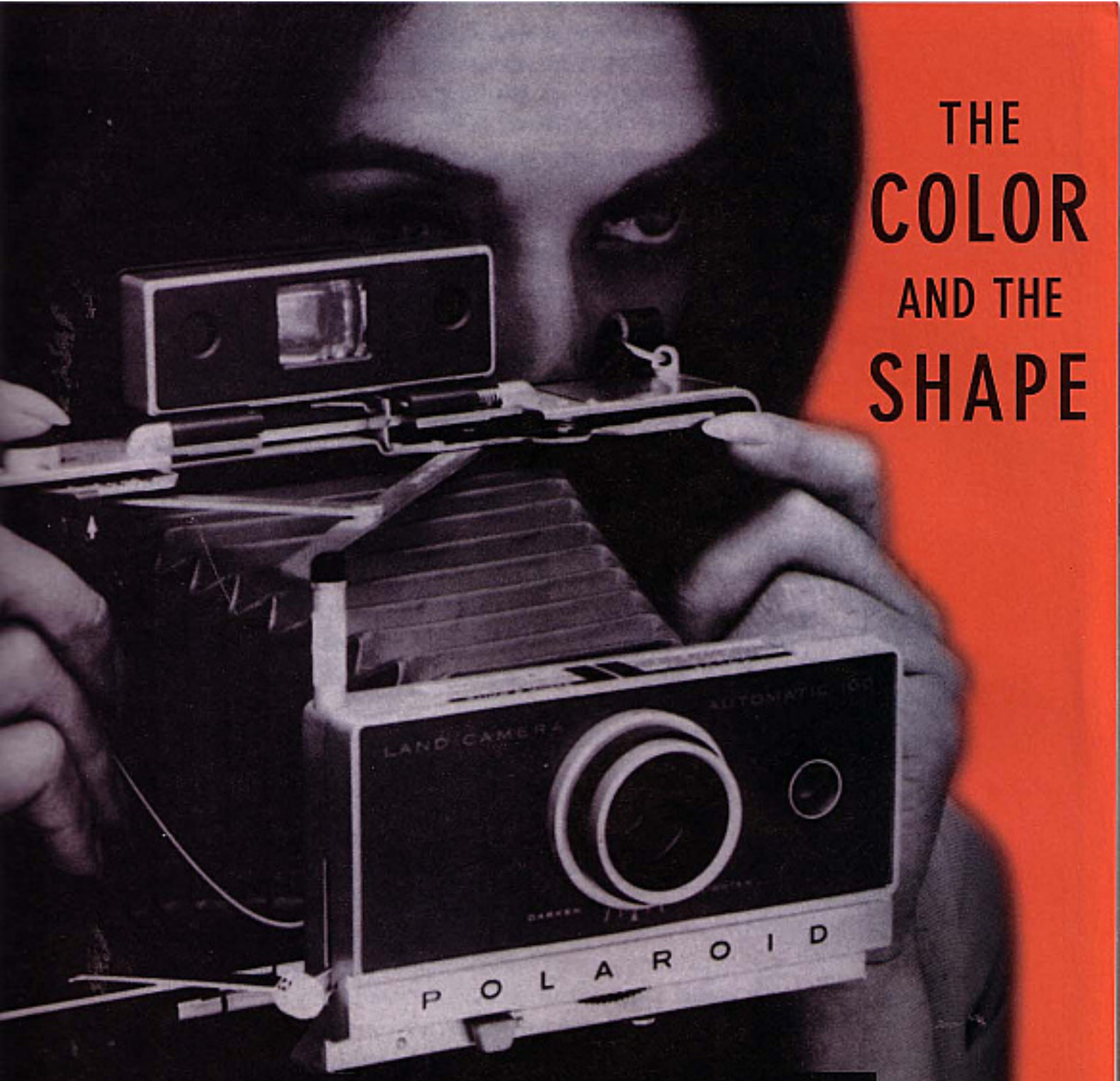


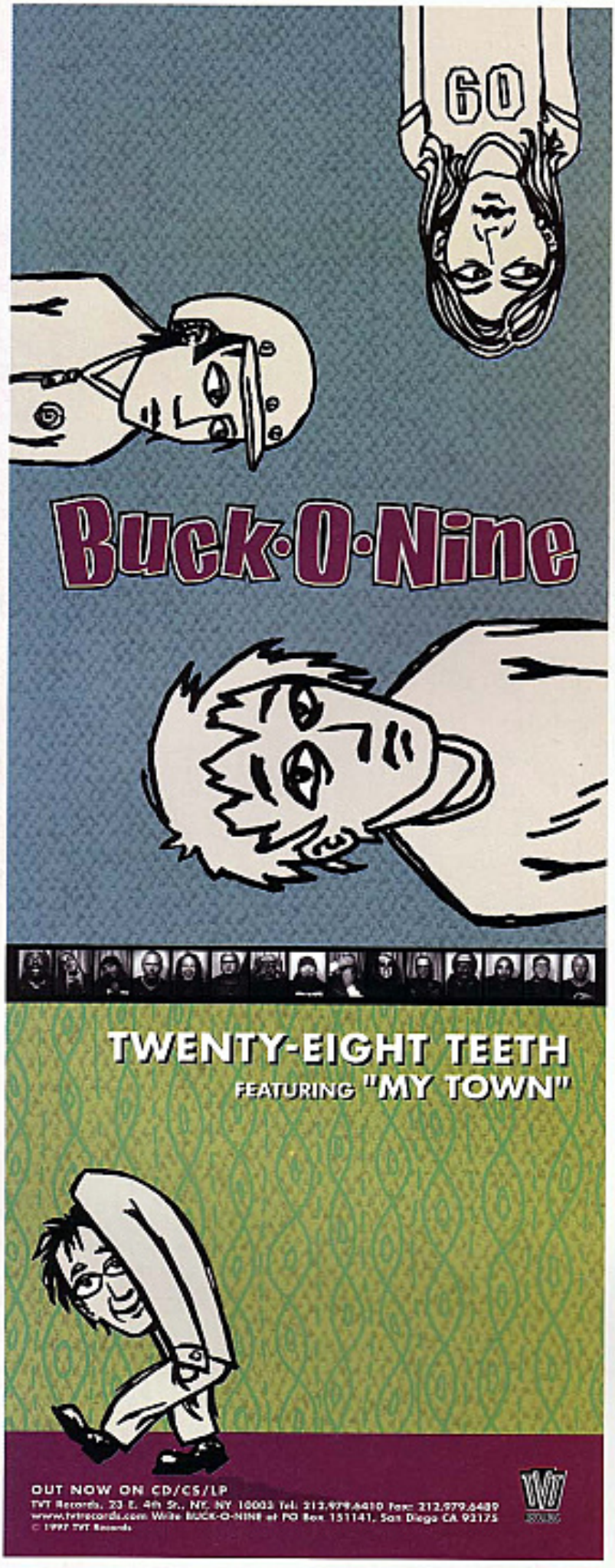
THE COLOR AND THE SHAPE

HENRY DREYFUSS, DESIGNER OF POLAROID'S AUTOMATIC 100 LAND CAMERA, J33, THE SWINGER, BIG SHOT AND SX-70

by Russell Flinchum

Though he is hardly a household name, industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss is arguably one of the most influential Americans of the 20th Century. Born 1904 of German immigrant parents in New York City, he attended the Ethical Culture Society' High School, from where he first went into set design for New York theatres, then created interiors for the RKO cinema chain. But it was in his design of products that Dreyfuss quickly started to make a mark. Among his earliest successes were General Electric refridgerators, McCall's magazine (1932-44), Crane bathroom fixtures, Westlclox Big Ben alarm clocks, Hoover vacuums, even Deere & Co. tractors. In the '30s, when telephones were rented along with phone line service, he began a career-long relationship with Bell Laboratories, the manufacturing end of AT&T. This led to his first indelible mark, the design of the classic Bell Model 302. Dreyfuss' work showed a sense of style for the art deco age, but also a utilitarian concept that tended to age incredibly well.

Writes author Russell Flinchum, "Dreyfuss would routinely decline work when he could not have ultimate control of the design process... Unless he could consult directly with the people who would be responsible for making, as well as marketing, a product, his design innovations might be compromised or even made impossible by the conditions prevailing at the place of manufacture."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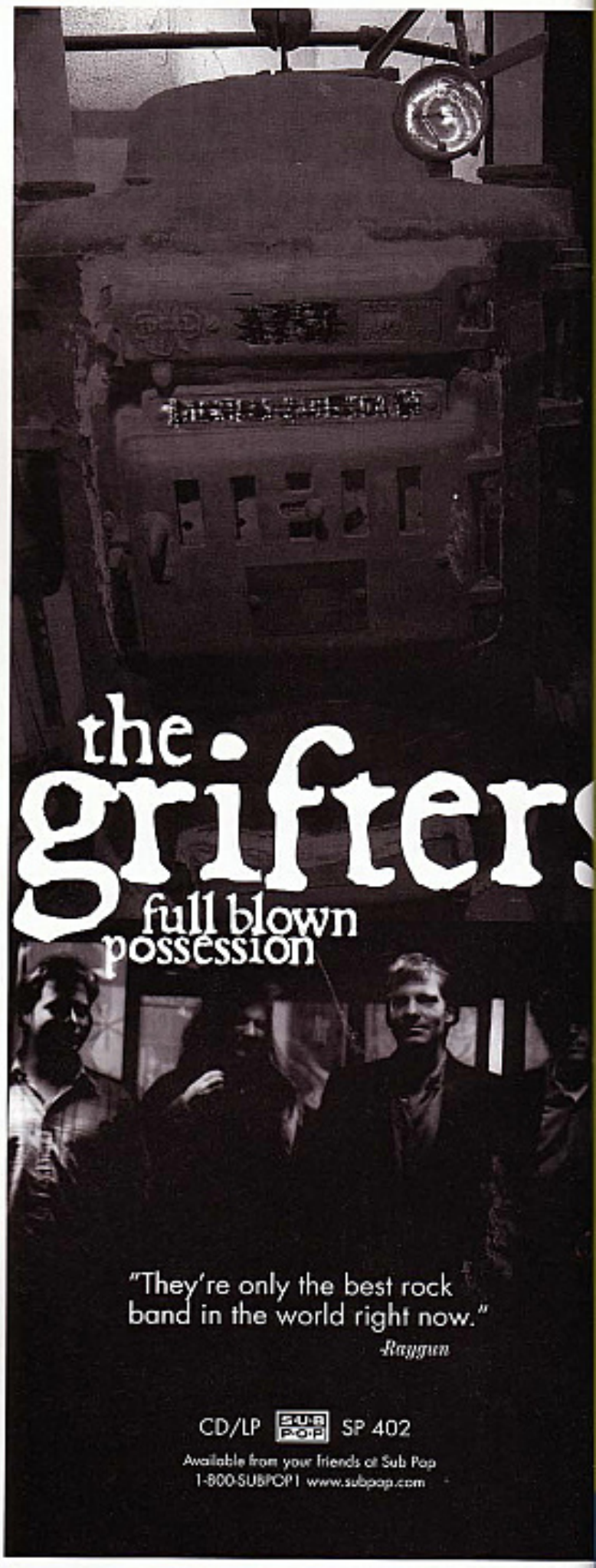
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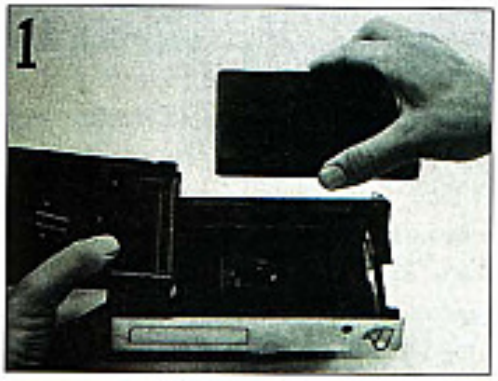
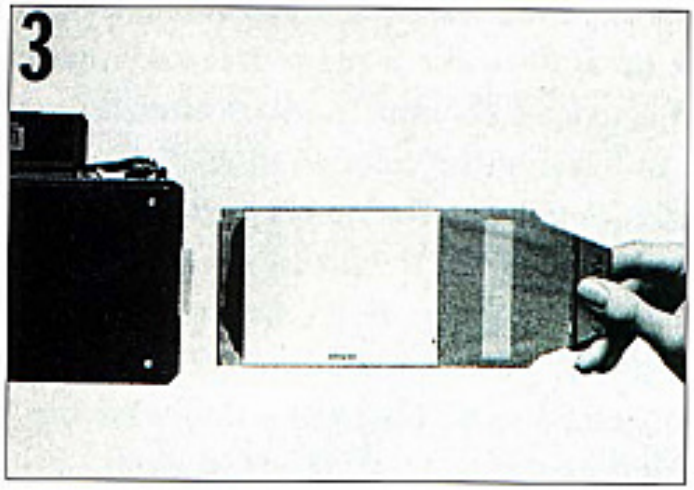
Said Dreyfuss himself: "... [S]o many people feel that we are just interested in what a product looks like ... "We are not in the business of style or fashion. Ours is a basic approach; our designing must be generic by nature. If the most contemporary of design can be called 'classic,' then call us classicists."

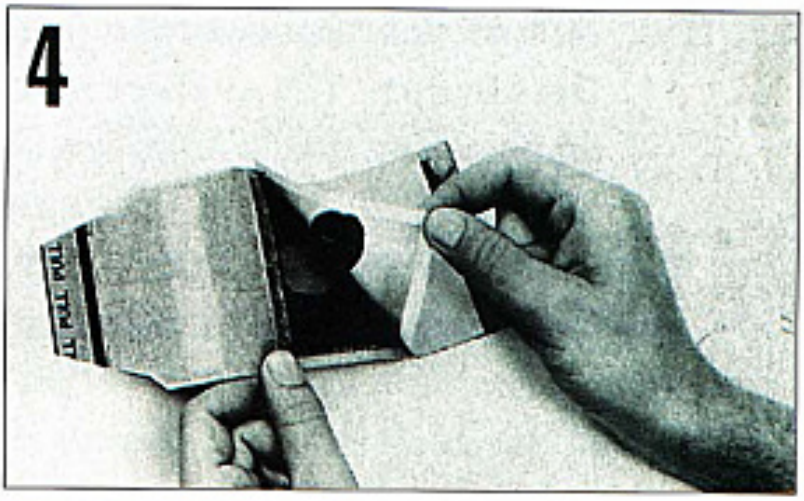
Dreyfuss' work was undeniably classic. Through the war era and beyond, Dreyfuss would rework New York Central locomotives, including the legendary 20th Century Limited (and all of its emblematic interiors, dinnerware, and emblems) and Western Union offices, help refine the Convair car (a flying automobile with removable wing unit), and bring to life "perhaps the most ubiquitous piece of domestic hardware in the U.S." (Flinchum's words). This was the Honeywell T-86 round thermostat. If you've never noticed that thermostat before, well, that's because it was designed not to be noticed. Dreyfuss wrote: "...[I]f people are made safer, more efficient, more comfortable—or just plain happier—by contact with the product, then the designer has succeeded." Nearly at the same moment, Dreyfuss revised his Bell telephone with the eternal 1949 Model 500, including "the world's most prevalent handset" (Flinchum), the Type G, still used in most payphones to this date. Later, he would bring the '65 Trimline, whose influence on contemporary phones is also noteworthy. Writes Flinchum of the telephones, "Their quiet message of quality was a reflection of the man who helped to shape them."

In his personal life, Dreyfuss was an intriguing enigma. Counting Theodore "Dr. Seuss" Geisel and Vincent Price among his close friends, he invariably stayed at the Plaza Hotel when in New York, dined at the Plaza's Oak Room or "21," and always wore brown colored clothes. Apparently this was just a simplification of his lifestyle, but the fact that he also had brown eveningwear implies, according to Flinchum, that he may also have done so in order to distinguish himself from the blue and gray suit wearing business throng.

After raising himself and his office to a significant level of notoriety, Dreyfuss was retained by the Polaroid corporation to help redesign the company's camera line. Of Dreyfuss' associates, Jim Conner would share in the role of helping Polaroid realize Edwin Land's visions, through the models J33, Automatic 100, Automatic 101, Model 20 (Swinger), Big Shot, and finally the pinnacle of Polaroid design, the SX-70. In the following excerpt from his excellent biography Henry Dreyfuss: The Man in The Brown Suit (Rizzoli), author Russell Flinchum examines the evolution and output of the relationship between Dreyfuss and Land.







Edwin Land, founder and presiding genius of [the Polaroid Corporation], had a keen appreciation of the difference that industrial design could make. He had wanted to work with Henry Dreyfuss on the development of his "instant" camera from its inception, but Dreyfuss's commitment to camera manufacturer Ansco prevented him from taking the account.

Dreyfuss's fascination with Polaroid's inventions was continuous in the years up to 1961, when the account was secured. Whether it was "a blaze of Polaroid light" proposed for the Theme Exhibit at the 1939 New York World's Fair or a "curtainless window," obtained by using two Polaroid filters, for Consolidated Vultee's airplanes a little less than a decade later and eventually installed in the portholes of staterooms on the S.S. *Independence*, Dreyfuss sought to apply Land's innovations to his own designs.

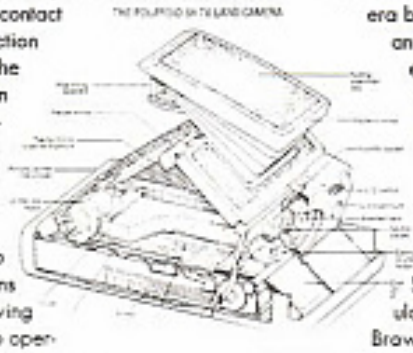
The Automatic 100 Land Camera was the first case in which a contribution from Dreyfuss to a Polaroid product had a decisive impact. The breakthrough design made its commercial debut in 1963. According to Industrial Design magazine, the new camera was less than half the weight of its predecessors, which brought it into the same range as a number of non-instant, single-lens reflex cameras, then state-of-the-art in 35-mm photography. Perhaps more revolutionary was automatic electronic control of shutter mechanism, which had been attempted in a previous Polaroid camera but which was considerably refined in this version. The redesign of the mechanism did away with a number of complicated mechanical parts in favor of a greater reliance on electronics. Coupled with an easy-to-use rangefinder, this design reduced the complaints about the cameras producing over- or underexposed and out-of-focus images.

The most significant advance, however, was in the overall operation of the camera. The Automatic 100 introduced pack film—that is, snap-in packages of either black-and-white or color film that eliminated the awkwardness associated with roll films. Roll film had limited the speed of operation and often proved messy in less-than-ideal operating situations. Now users no longer had to wait for the image to develop within the camera body, but could remove the developing photograph and immediately shoot another. Chemicals for each photograph were sealed

•1961: The Model J33 Land Camera, with an electric eye, is the first model involving the Dreyfus design office.
•1963: Polacolor film is first made available in south Florida. Also introduced, the Automatic 100 Land Camera, a lightweight color-compatible pack film model with an electric eye, retailing from $130 to $160.
•1964: The Automatic 101 Land Camera, a cheaper version of the 100.
•1965: The new mod-look Swinger model (only usable with b&w film), is Polaroid's first foray into the low budget teen market. Kodak feels the heat.
•1967: The 200 series of Colorpack cameras are introduced.
•1968: The Big Swinger is introduced as a replacement for the (little) Swinger, only to be outmoded itself a

within discrete packets on the film, eliminating or reducing leakage. This, combined with the introduction of color film that developed in fifty seconds and a new and faster black-and-white film that developed in ten, meant that Polaroid's equipment could successfully compete with that of conventional camera manufacturers.

The Dreyfuss team was headed by Jim Conner, who supervised the work (which was done in Dreyfuss' California office) and acted as the primary contact with Polaroid's research, design, and production engineers. Land had begun development of the Automatic 100 by placing a lens atop a film package and stating that Polaroid's next camera should be no larger than those components, clearly an unrealizable goal but one characteristic of his driving vision of a superior, "absolute one-step photography."



The focus of the Dreyfuss contribution was to enhance the camera's ease of use, making buttons and levers more discernible for novices and deriving shapes for these controls that made them easier to operate. While the technology of the film, optics, and electronics were solely Polaroid's province, Conner and others made significant suggestions regarding the reduction of the camera's size (through the arrangement of components) and making the materials lighter and more robust. They applied the office's own system of symbols to the camera (which had begun in work for Deere & Co. and National Supply Company in the late 1950s). In developing the design of the camera, the team had analyzed the individual steps in its handling through charts of a cartoonlike user to anticipate details of how a Polaroid camera, which could now be slung over the shoulder, could be used more efficiently. The technical capabilities of this camera were thus reconciled to the way people actually used it. For example, now that the developing photographs could be removed from the camera before they were "done," where were they to be stored if the user wanted to take another photograph? Could the user accomplish this with the camera slung over his or her shoulder? Such niceties might not be anticipated by engineers oriented most strongly toward technical feasibility and cost reduction, but they were essential in ensuring the success of a consumer product. Here the firm's expertise in user behavior, developed in work such as the NIKE missile system for the United States government (where an operational misstep had far graver implications than a too-dark snapshot), found application in peacetime. The result of this work for Polaroid has been a part of everyday experience for millions over the last twenty years. Most cameras used to make identification cards have been Polaroid products, operated by people not necessarily trained in photography who had to be guided through procedures in a straightforward, intelligible fashion. A mixture of symbols and words made this system effective. Drivers' licenses, for example, have been handed to eager new operators in minutes as a matter of course rather than reaching them in the mail days or weeks later.

The Automatic 100 Land Camera defined the start of a new generation of Polaroid products aimed at a broad consumer market (products for scientific, medical, and other specialized purposes had long formed a major, but less visible, portion of the company's output). In a pattern that would be repeated, a relatively high-priced model would be introduced with a number of startlingly new features. Breakthroughs would begin to appear in more modestly priced cameras in the following years, but the lower-priced version would rarely compete directly with the earlier model. A great deal of the Dreyfuss firm's work involved these designs, standardizing appearances while maintaining a certain "snob appeal" for the top-of-the-line model (again, price differentials were based on functional superiority and not appearance alone). For example, changes might call for replacing leather with a plastic substitute, collapsible bellows with solid bodies, or similar cost-saving strategies. The Swinger was an exception to this general principle of operations. Designed from the start to be a product that would be inexpensive enough for teenagers (and debuting in 1965 at $19.95), the Swinger took Polaroid decisively into the world of popular photography. An improved roll film, which reduced costs, also allowed photographs to develop outside of the camera body. A fixed-focus lens coupled with a solid body and an extremely simple photometer exposure system eliminated many user options but did away with guesswork as well. When looking through the viewfinder, the user simply squeezed the stem of the shutter release and rotated it until the word yes became distinguishable. This meant that the exposure would be correct, and the shutter could be activated by pushing down on the same stem. Light, easy to use, and affordable, it was accompanied by an advertising campaign that urged consumers to "meet the Swinger." In many ways, it was a return to the basis of popular photography sketched out by George Eastman with his Brownie at the turn of the century, with one important exception: rather than having to wait to see a snapshot, the photographer's gratification was instant. Brownie owners sent both film and camera back to Rochester for processing and reloading; those purchasing the Swinger could see immediate results.

At first glance, the Swinger seemed no different than many other cameras, except that its body was white instead of the expected black. All of its elements, including the one-piece focusing stem/shutter release, involved the Dreyfuss design team from the start. When handling it, the user became aware of the camera's sculptural form. To accept the roll film, the camera's back was made considerably wider on the right-hand side, which also created a substantial hand grip. Weight was reduced through the use of plastics to the point that the camera could be dangle from a plastic strap (as bikini-clad Ali McGraw did in a television commercial that was part of the advertising campaign). The white plastic body had a black "face" that was enlivened by a metallic Mylar "sandwich" that surrounded the lens. Distinct from most of the Polaroid line, it had an undeniably pop-art appearance.

A large and rather simple wood-and-vinyl model of a camera is preserved today in the Polaroid Corporation Archives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. On Dreyfuss's micro-film is a sketch of a similar design, labeled "Homebody." The Cambridge model is for a bellows-type folding camera. Its large size did not make it very portable; rather it was intended as an easy-to-operate "second" camera for portrait photography. The idea again was Land's, but it began to take shape during a meeting with Dreyfuss. It would be a "stay-at-home" camera that might be stored in a closet or behind the couch. What emerged was the Big Shot, a solid-body camera with an extremely long "barrel" that was an offshoot of the earlier Swinger or Model 20 Land Camera, the least expensive Polaroid camera ever marketed. While not a great commercial success, the Big Shot was immortalized by Andy Warhol, who no doubt admired its convenience, and whose output with this camera was as prodigious as Dreyfuss's with his Minox miniature.

Dreyfuss left the firm that bore his name on the first day of 1969, intending to matriculate as a corporate adviser. Unfortunately, he did not foresee that many of his contacts and clients were so satisfied with the team he set up to take on his work, that they didn't see a need to keep the old man in the picture. Still, he continued working with AT&T, Deere, Hallmark, and on a universal symbols sourcebook. When in 1972, his wife Doris Marks was diagnosed with liver cancer, she and the apparently healthy Dreyfuss decided to end their lives together, and did so by carbon monoxide poisoning. Dreyfuss was 68, and his work for Polaroid would be one of the last of his great achievements.

Excerpted from Henry Dreyfuss: The Man in the Brown Suit, courtesy of Rizzoli Publications, National Design Museum and the author.

year later with the color-capable Colorpack II.
•1969: Model 360; Model ID-3 Land identification system, soon to become the standard for DMVs nationwide.
•1971: April 27th, Land displays the SX-70 "Aladdin" folding camera at a press conference, declaring it will become "the basic camera of the future." Not yet, though. The Square Shooter, a color-only camera, is made to use Type 88 square format film, the new standard. Also introduced, the Big Shot, using Type 108 film, for portrait photography—a hit with almost nobody except Andy Warhol, who

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Film On Film:

Charles Eames' Polaroid Cinema

by Rodney Sinclair

I do not profess to know all there is to know of the world of designers Charles and Ray Eames, but I dug what they did. About 10 years ago, I started to collect Eames furniture, perhaps their best known work. It was pretty easy then—perhaps too easy. And too easy to sell (sigh). Aesthetically, they changed my life a considerable amount.

About 2 years after I was turned on to his furniture, I read in the paper that there were screenings of films by Charles Eames. It was on Thursday, it was at the Los Angeles Museum Of Contemporary Art, it was free. Curious to see another side of the man, I got there, sat down, and saw eight films. One of the films, called Something about Photography, was on the Polaroid Land Camera. It was made in 1976, when fashion was at its peak.

Edwin Land, inventor of the Polaroid Cameras, knew of Charles Eames and his artistic approach to his life, and commissioned him to shoot a short film about the Polaroid SX-70 Land Camera. Because Land envisioned SX-70 pictures being more than just snapshots, he wanted Eames to simply demonstrate the rules of quality picture taking. Though Eames didn't have to use the Land cameras in the film, being a fan of instant photography, he insisted upon integrating the SX-70.

The film, originally shown at a stockholders meeting in the spring of 1976, makes a personal statement along with an examination of the camera's photographic process. Eames considered the SX-70 essential, a way to have your cake and eat it too. In his everyday life, Eames was hardly seen without a camera, always making visual documentations of his world. The same year of '76, while gearing up for the exhibition "Connections: The Work of Charles and Ray Eames," Charles estimated that in the neighborhood of 300,000 photos were in the Eames Office file, dating back to the early '40s. As he narrates in Something about Photography, "The picture-taker need only look at the people and the everyday

loves it.
•1974: "Zip" is the lowest priced Land camera ever, at $13.95 list, marketed to teens. It only takes B&W film, though, and even kids aren't that gullible. Camera is quickly reintroduced as the "Electric Zip" [sounds like a dance] with color film and color shells, at $21.95.
•1975: Polaroid's old pals at Kodak introduce the EK-4 and EK-6 cameras, with their own instant film. Within a year, Polaroid files a patent infring ment suit in the US District Court F Boston. Also: Polaroid introduces t "Pronto," a non-folding plastic

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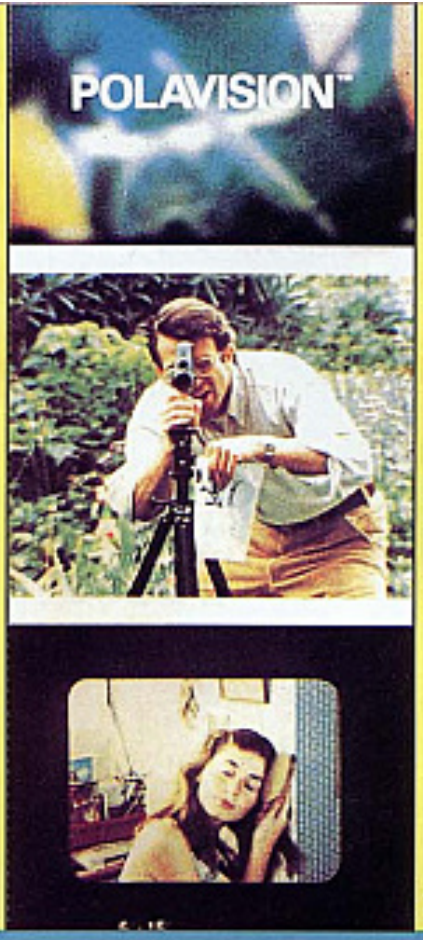
events and things he cares deeply about to find the most meaningful subjects of photography."

In 1977, Charles made Polavision, a film to demonstrate the new Polavision camera—an instant movie camera with a two-and-a-half-minute film cassette—to stockholders. Seeing the challenge, Charles couldn't resist. He and the Eames Office were very excited to be involved.

Structured as six vignettes the length of the cassettes (just to drive the point home), the film touches base on the importance of planning and composition of photo images in film making, along with stop motion animation. Among the vignettes are "Macbeth," which shows kids performing Shakespeare, "Kites," a story of making and flying a kite, and "The Trunk in the Attic," about discovering old belongings in an attic (maybe Tom Waits saw this when he wrote "Soldier Story?"). Also, "The Chase," a girl chasing her brother that stole her diary; "Lisa Draws A Letter," about a girl who opens a gift and draws a thank you letter; and "Bicycles," a panoramic view of people riding bikes.

The Eames Office made their third and final film for Polaroid, Sonar One-Step, in 1978. It was first shown for, you guessed it, stockholders. The film was made to demonstrate the ways of a new sonar type automatic focusing system. Using live-action photography and animation, it explains the development and technology of this system. Charles Eames made films the same way he made furniture, with people in mind.



1

3

1. Something about Photography 8 minutes 32 seconds; color
Written by Johnene Burns and narrated by John Neubert and Charles Eames.
Music composed and conducted by Donald Spaeth.

2. Polavision 15 minutes; color
Written by Charles Eames and Johnene Burns and narrated by Andrew Duggan.
Music written and composed by Elmer Bernstein.

3. Sonar One-Step 8 minutes; color
Written by Johnene Burns and Donald Spaeth and narrated by Marvin Miller.
Music written and composed by Donald Spaeth.

2

camera which takes SX-70 film, and the prototype for the One Step and most other Polaroids of the next 20 years.

•1977: Polavision, a cartridge-film movie camera, can produce three minute long instant films.

•1985: After ten years, the suit against Kodak is eventually settled in Polaroid's favor. Kodak recalls all their cameras.

•1997: Despite waves of new model introductions, Polaroid will still repair and supply film for any of its camera models—even the 95.

cool is actually quite lame

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Eric Meyer

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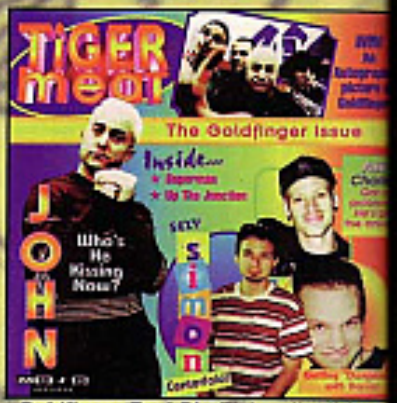

Goldfinger/Reel Big Fish split 7" $4.0
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MOJO

OTHAR TURNER

If you want to speak to the Guru, you have to climb the mountain. If you want to speak to one of the last true Mississippi blues men, you have to come into his shack. And bring cold beer. Othar Turner is 88 years old and the last master of the cane fife. His Rising Star Fife and Drum Band consists of his daughter and grandson on snare drums and cousin on bass drum. Their music is pure funk and earth. When you hear them play, it's hard to believe you are less than five years from the millenium.

Turner lives in Gravel Springs, up yonder from Junior Kimbrough's. With children, dogs, goats, horses, hogs, and flies all around, we sat on his front porch as he told me rich stories—including first hand tales of the late great bottleneck guitarist Fred McDowell—wise philosophies, and wisdom, some of which I received as I was leaving."Watch out for the cow shit, son," he advised. I was already ankle deep.

—Luther Dickinson,
Sugar Ditch records

LAST OF THE FIFE & DRUM MEN.

"I was jus' about sixteen years old when I started blowing the cane. We would all come out of the field when it rained. You can't pick cotton when it's too wet. We'd say, 'I hear the fifes blowin'.' It was an ol' man they called R. E. Williams. And he was out there blowin' the fife.

'Mr. R.E.?'

He say, 'Um huh.'

I say, 'What is that you blowin', man?'

He say, 'It's a fife, son.'

I say, 'Man, how you make that?'

He say, 'Son, I jus' made it.'

I looked at him, I say, 'Mr. R. E. You make me one of them?'

He say, 'I don't know. If you be a smart, industrious boy, listen to your mama and obey her, I'll make you a fife.'

I say, 'I'm gonna listen to my mama, mind her, do everything she say. When you gonna make me one?'

He say, 'When I get a chance, boy.'

I wished it was tomorrow, but it was prob'ly about four weeks, he say, 'Othar, come by here son, I got somethin' for you.'

I say, 'Yessuh.'

He say, 'Here yo' fife.'

I say, 'Mr. R.E., I sho' do thank you, I sho' do thank you.'

He say, "You ain't never gonna do nothin' with it.'

I say, 'But I'll try!'

'Well son, don't nothin' make a failin' but a tryer.'

'Yessuh, I'm gonna try to learn it.'

And he say, 'If you try and enter into it, you'll learn it.'

And everywhere I got a chance, you turn around, I be there tryin' to blow that cane. Momma say 'Put that dadblamed cane down, I'm tired of it.' I put it down. I catch her goin' out, I'd go back and get it and start again. I learned it. You learn one piece on a cane, jus' keep on gettin that note, it'll come to ya on and on. And I learned how to blow it. I made my own songs. First song I started on was 'Shimmy She Wobble.' And when I learned me one piece, I kept on. And that's what I'm doin' now. I'm gonna keep on again, I'm gonna learn me some mo' on that cane.

After the guys found I could play the cane, they be hirin' me. They got drums, but they wanted the fife blowin'. And for me to play drums for them. I can play them all, the snare drum, the bass drum, and blow the cane.

Well now, that is the music of fife and drums. Playing drums. The old people taught me and told me that. One time way back in Africa, that was the music they

had. And if somebody deceased—dead—at the funeral, they would march behind the casket to the cemetery. That's the way they would do.

Me and Fred McDowell, we run together like we was brothers. I own a horse and buggy and I pick up Fred on a Friday night and we went around the house and played for home brew. That's right. I furnish the horse, and he played. Hey, we'd have some fun. What you talkin' about! Sat'dy nite, we'd go out again. And he could play.

I'd tell him one night, I said, 'Fred, you know what, when you playin' that guitar and singin', it sounds lonesome.' I said, 'You worried about anything?'

He said, 'Oh, I got a thing 'bout an ol' gal way back here.'

I say, 'Uh huh, you got the blues.'

He say, 'You damn right. It's the blues make me do that. Well, I tell you what, I'm gonna quit playin'. I'm gonna sell this damn guitar' I say, "Uh uh. Don't quit, Fred. Keep up. Don't get rid of your guitar. Way you play and sing, one day that's gonna value you something.'

'How you know?'

'I feel like it. Ain't nobody else can play like you, way you run them strings. You doin' somethin' these folks want to do. I can't do it. I ain't done it. I wish I could. Don't quit, Fred, somebody gonna come by huntin' somebody to play music. Way you play, somebody want you.'

Sure enough in two years time, that happened. These guys come by in the pouring down rain, blow in my yard, spoke to me, said, 'We're goin' around lookin' for some good blues players. You know any?'

I say, 'I know one real good blues singer, living in that house yonder. 'He say, 'What's his name?'

I say. 'Fred McDowell. Go over there.' Them guys stayed there 'til eleven o'clock. Next thing I know, Fred's gone.

I've been a heap of places, and I ain't found nary one yet to blow the cane. Yeah, I been some places, fellow, that I never thought I'd'a been and I bet it take 25 cents to mail me a letter. Memphis, Chicago, New York. I been there. San Diego, Washington, DC, San Francisco, Jackson, Miami, Florida and Columbus, MS down on the Gulf. And all of them, they just can't do nothin' with it.

You got to be patient with it. You got to know how to know it. You got to make it do what you want it to do. You got to make it up in yo' mind, say 'I'm gonna do this, I'm gonna do such and such thing,' and stay on it. Don't just lay it down cause you can't do it then. That's where you're losin' it. Be patient.

I wanted to know how to blow it. I got me one and I stayed with it until I got it like I wanted it. It's got to be up here. You put that cane up and start to blowin', it's in yo' head, up here, and you can put what you got through yo' mouth into that cane. If you knowed it, it'll sound all right. If you don't knowed it, it ain't gonna blow. You got to find somethin' to go out on, jes' like writing a letter. You got to to out there and sign something to it, so that's what blowing a cane is. Yes sir."

Judah Bauer

On his 20 Miles collaboration with Othar the Reluctant.

Othar Turner. ~~XXXXXmmmmXXXXX~~ The freedom and the know how. This is the sound of the war party boiling up its blood to attack the neighbors with no mercy, or some such violent intent. The devil can be heard in this ~~XXXXXXXX~~ and very loose drumming. It sounds like war and riot, like all good rock n' roll should sound.

Hence, why I enlisted his reluctant, cash up front, support. First heard of him on the Tav Falco record, wondering who this great drummer was, playing so loose and great feeling. Then later finding out it was a drum corps. And then hearing the Traveling Through the Jungle cd and finding out this is an old tradition. Been around since ~~XXXXXX~~ and great players like Napoleon Strickland, Sid Hemphill, and Othar playing with these guys, Fred McDowell banging on a wastebasket. This stuff was sad, deep, and timeless. Simple stuff with a lot a power.

They showed up three days late, after we had stopped for the night, given up. Him and his four drummers-parade drum, snares, and tom-set up, complaining the minute they walked in the door. This guy did not like me taking the limelight. He's used to being the star. And him complaining that I played too loud: "It take two-three (people) to blow cane with you." That's fine, this was an experiment that might or might now work. I could see the confusion for me to be playing rock and roll ~~XXXXXXXX~~ -maybe start playing double time and him looking at me like "why are you doing that for." The way they play down there is start one riff and when you stop playing it ,the song is finished. Very precise drum patterns. He was correcting any mistakes that the drummers might make. They had to get it right. And he blew on his fife old standards "My Babe," "Late At Night, Just a Little 'Fore Day."

It was an honor to play with a man who is a holder of this old tradition. His parting statement on our jam session was encouraging: "You're modern trash, you're a waste of time." That's alright, what is he, around 80 years old? I wouldn't expect him to like it. And what he plays is old.

OIder than the hills. Probably didn't even call it music back then. It comes from another time and there are probably no other people who will play this kind of music when he dies. Some may play it through his records but no direct lineage, that is, someone who grew up in this tradition. The freedom and the know how.

Judah an' a yo' boy. Photo by S.C.

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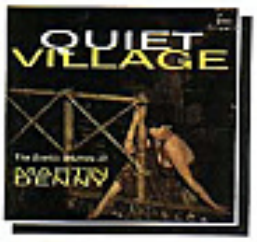

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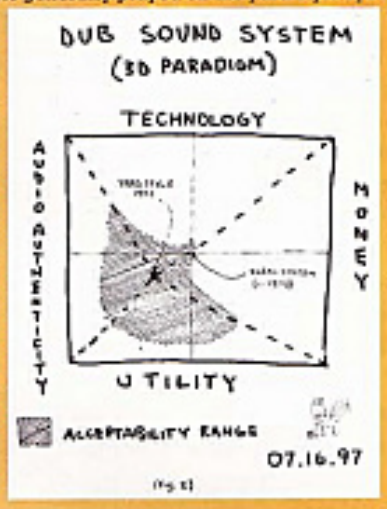
SOHO SOUND SYSTEM STYLEE

Yard Style (yahrd stil) n. 1. an outdoor social gathering for the purpose of listening to music. Origin-ated in the 1970's in the West Indies (esp. Jamaica) where various DJ's played music in communal areas (yards) found in between groups of houses using ad-hoc, homemade sound systems. [see GROUNATION DRUMMING SESSIONS, LEE PERRY, TOASTERS — the advent of rap]. 2. a sound system or machine of found parts designed and built by Tom Sachs and Joe Toronon (New York City, 1997) for the purpose of transforming the Guru snocone stand (371 Lafayette St., NYC) into a place to kick back outdoors with a few friends and listen to dub the way Lee Perry would most likely want to have his music presented (see left). In effects, a giant homemade portable boom box. Of special interest (a) the 1940's military loudspeaker designed for a male voice to be projected through various amplifiers at maximum possible volume is used in combination with (b) the 1970's KLH home stereo speakers. (note: speakers and music generally played on the yard style system are of similar vintage.) Also of note: the machine is mounted on a harness (made of stolen parts) that can be attached to a bicycle for easy transport. [see BRICOLAGE, DUCT TAPE, MILITARY SURPLUS & STEEL DRUMS]. 3. a philosophy which serves as the foundation for the design of the yard style sound system. The philosophy is based on the relationships between four basic elements: technology, money, utility, and authenticity (see 4-way graph below). The yard style way of thinking is closely related to those used in the design and building of specialized car stereo systems [see DUB, MIAMI BASS, LIFE IN ITS PUREST FORM].

—Brooke Williams



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Who cares about "desert island discs? Here's something you can really use. Here's ...

Ricky Powell's Music to Get Busy to

"Don't cha hate when you're 'making love' or just plain ol' doing 'the freaky' and are intertwined like a hot vanilla-fudge swirl sundae, then a wack song comes on in the background? It can fuck the whole shit up. I know *I've* got my own personal sophisticated 'funk tapes,' just in case something interesting comes up. And let me tell you, the auditory enhancement of the atmosphere can make for an invigorating and unihibiting ambiance, yo. So I pulled a couple of cool cats over and said 'Excuse me, I don't mean to get too personal, but what would be a dope soundtrack for you to get busy to?'"

RICKY POWELL:

- Maria Muldaur: "Midnight At The Oasis"
- Herbie Hancock: "Chameleon"
- Deodato: "2001"
- Eddie Palmieri: "Harlem River Drive"
- Leon Russell and friends: "Youngblood" live at the concert for Bangladesh
- Jimmy McGriff: "The Bird"
- Jimmy Castor Bunch: "It's Just Begun" or "Troglodyte"
- Vicki Anderson: "SuperGood"
- Honey Cone: "One Monkey Don't Stop No Show"
- Sergio Mendez: "The Girl From Ipanema"
- The Pointer Sisters: "Yes We Can Can"
- Jerry Goldsmith: Planet Of The Apes soundtrack

MONEY MARK

- Ravel's Bolero
- Idris Muhammad "Shaft"
- Tone-Loc "Wild Thing"
- Bad Company "Feel Like Making Love"
- Ohio Players "Fire"

alt• "Meet The Flintstones"

BOBBITO (THE STRETCH ARMSTRONG SHOW):

- John Coltrane Ballads
- Stevie Wonder Talking Book
- Seal's first album
- Rufus Featuring Chaka Kahn Got To Be There
- Nina Simone For Women (live)
- Gil-Scott Heron Winter In America

JEFF "CHAIRMAN" MAO (DJ, EDITOR, EGO TRIP):

- Stan Getz & Joao Gilberto: "The Girl From Ipanema"
- Isaac Hayes: "Never Gonna Give You Up"
- Brighter Side Of Darkness: "Love Jones"
- Bloodstone: "Natural High"
- Minnie Riperton: "Inside My Love"
- Pink Floyd: Dark Side Of The Moon

MATTHEW HOROVITZ'S SLOW JAM LOVE AFFAIR

- The Stylistics: "Betcha By Golly Wow"
- Deniece Williams: "Silly"
- Frederick: "Gentle (Calling Your Name)"
- Teddy Pendergrass: "Close The Door"
- Stacey Lattisaw: "Love On A Two-Way Street"
- Marvin Gaye: "You Sure Love To Ball"

MATTHEW HOROVITZ'S 90S LOVE

- Salt N Pepa: "What A Man"
- K7: "Come Baby Come"
- Gheorge Muresan (?): "The Sweat, My Balls"
- WOR-TV: "You'll Love It At Levitz"
- EMF: "Unbelievable"
- Luther Campbell: "Pop That Pussy"
- Vanilla Ice: "Roll 'Em Up"
- Positive K: "I Got A Man"

PRINCE PAUL

"If I'm gettin' busy, I'll play a girl haas records. That shit has more of an effect than Barry White."

BOB KEANE (DEL-FI RECORDS):

- Frank Sinatra's ballads like "Summer Wind," and some of the Nelson Riddle and Billy May stuff.
- Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through The Grapevine" ("In fact, any kind of soul stuff with a great drum sound is great to dance and 'get busy' too!!!")
- Sam Cooke's "You Send Me," on my first label, Keen Records. ("I remember that women used to just melt when they heard the guy sing. He was the first 'Sepia Sinatra.')
- The Platters' "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" ("I played this one on clarinet with my band.")
- Sarah Vaughan, "Misty" ("Boy, that was a bitch of a song!")

BEN LEE

- The old Stina Nordenstam record
- Bob Dylan Desire
- Nick Drake Bryter Layter

_" I don't want to sound inexperienced, but I think those are the only three records I've done it to."

MATT PINFIELD

- Al Green Greatest Hits
- Sex-O-Rama (porno themes from the 70s)
- Supergrass In It For the Money
- Miles Davis Kind Of Blue
- The Best Of Blowfly

RUSSELL SIMINS:

- Lou Reed: "Metal Machine Music"
- Captain Beefheart "Trout Mask Replica"
- Yoko Ono "Plastic Ono Band"
- John Coltrane: "Ascension"
- Marvin Gaye: "Here, My Dear"

MIKE D.

- Atari Teenage Riot: "Fuck All"
- 2 Live Crew: "Throw The 'D'"
- Rob Base & DJ EZ Rock: "It Takes Two"
- Slayer & A.T.R.: "No Remorse"
- The Mob: "Crucial Point"
- Alec Empire: "The Peak"
- Bad Brains: "Attitude"
- Al Green: "Call Me"
- Zapp: "More Bounce To The Ounce"
- C&C Music Factory: "Things That Make You Go Hmmm"
- H-Town: "Knocking The Boots"
- Wrecks-In-Effect: "Rump Shaker"

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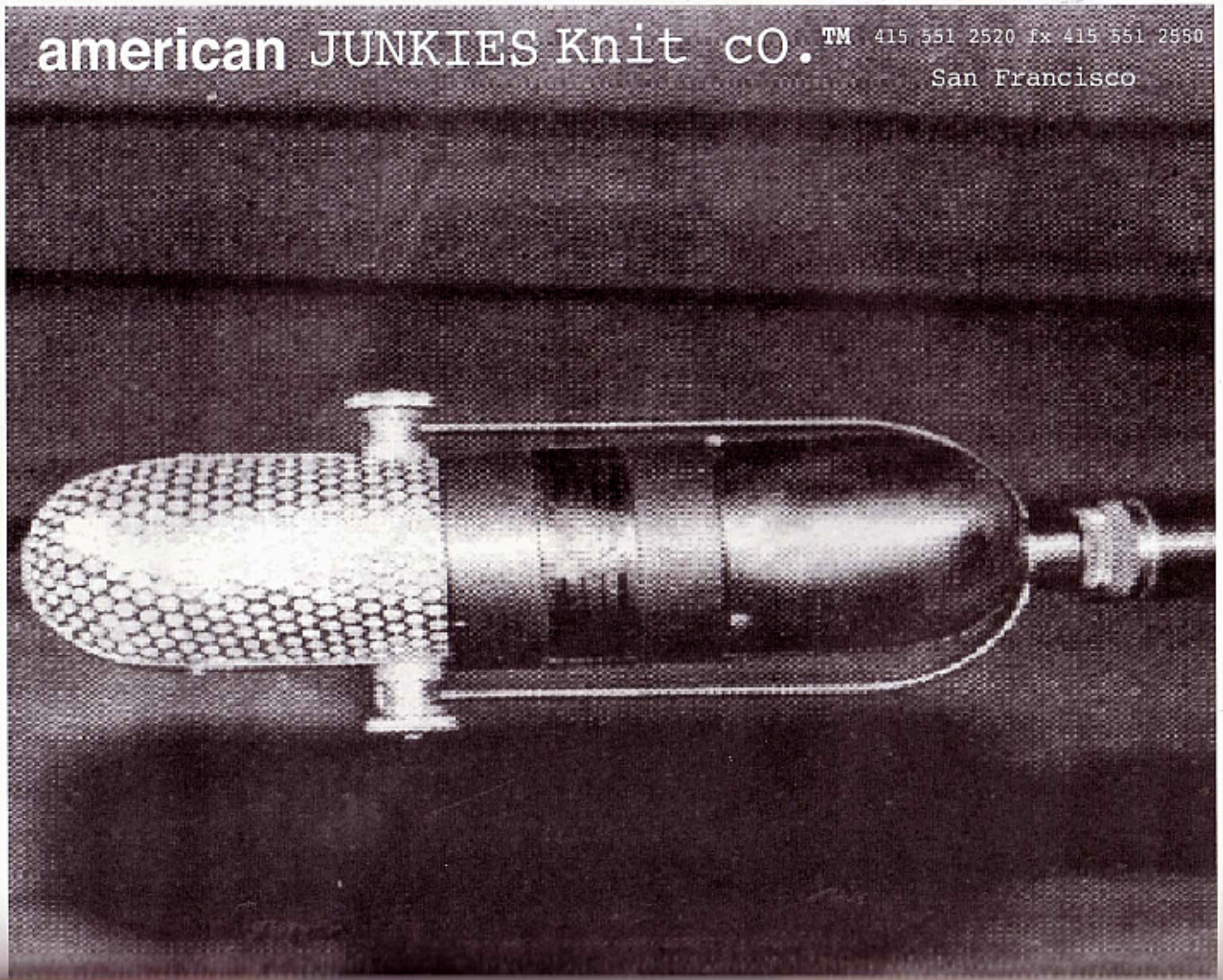


WELCOME TO THE PLANET OF BASS

I know by now, you are all wondering: Why Bass music? Have the people at Grand Royal lost it for real? Already, the op-ed commentary is probably jumping off: "Isn't this some music that came and went, never departing too far from Miami?" "I don't want to read about no 'come on ride the train' bullshit." "What are these people on?" "What about the exploitation of women in the Bass music scene?" On the other hand, some readers are probably saying, "Finally, they got their freak on in this magazine."

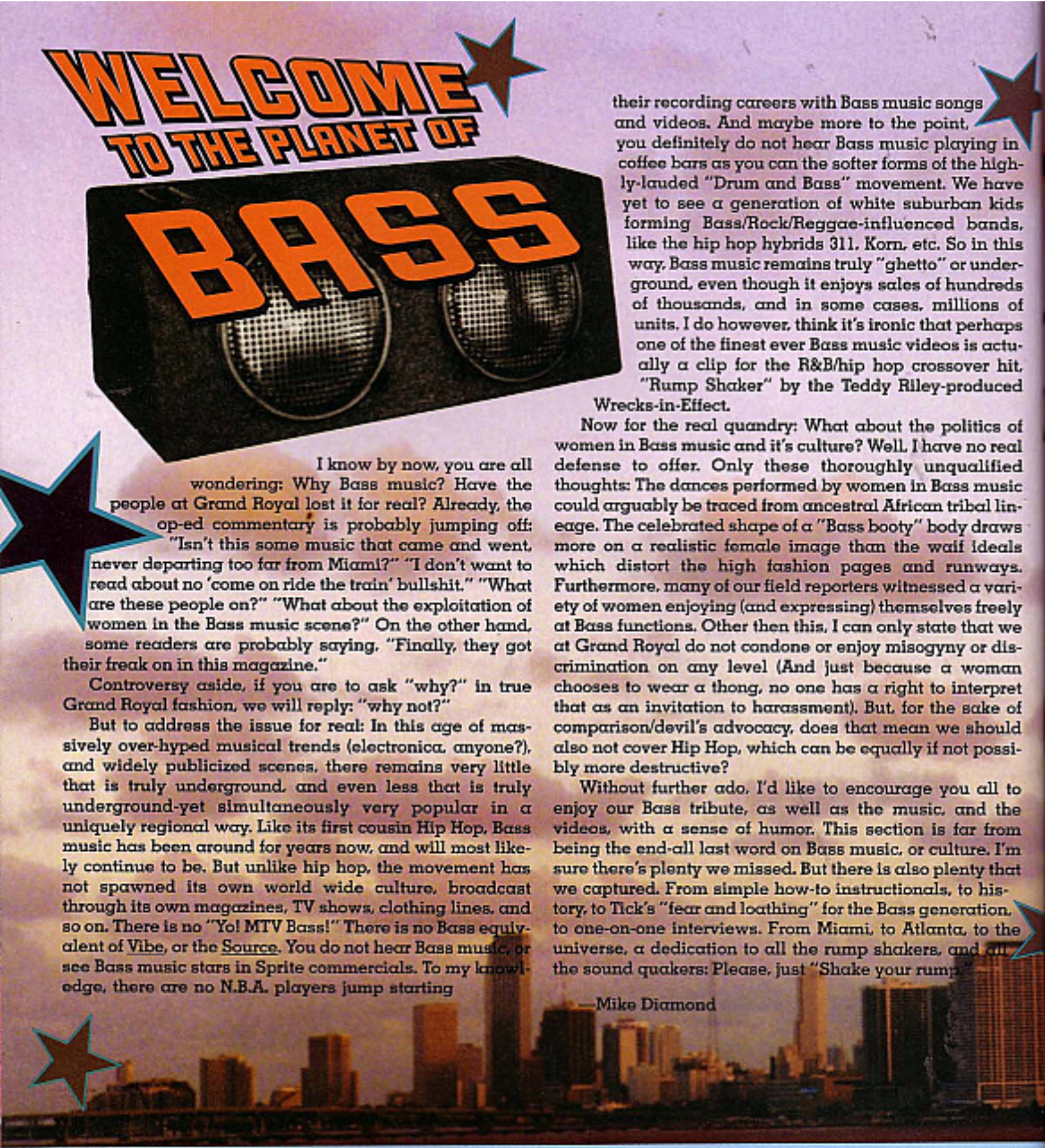
Controversy aside, if you are to ask "why?" in true Grand Royal fashion, we will reply: "why not?"

But to address the issue for real: In this age of massively over-hyped musical trends (electronica, anyone?), and widely publicized scenes, there remains very little that is truly underground, and even less that is truly underground-yet simultaneously very popular in a uniquely regional way. Like its first cousin Hip Hop, Bass music has been around for years now, and will most likely continue to be. But unlike hip hop, the movement has not spawned its own world wide culture, broadcast through its own magazines, TV shows, clothing lines, and so on. There is no "Yo! MTV Bass!" There is no Bass equivalent of Vibe, or the Source. You do not hear Bass music, or see Bass music stars in Sprite commercials. To my knowledge, there are no N.B.A. players jump starting their recording careers with Bass music songs and videos. And maybe more to the point, you definitely do not hear Bass music playing in coffee bars as you can the softer forms of the highly-lauded "Drum and Bass" movement. We have yet to see a generation of white suburban kids forming Bass/Rock/Reggae-influenced bands, like the hip hop hybrids 311, Korn, etc. So in this way, Bass music remains truly "ghetto" or underground, even though it enjoys sales of hundreds of thousands, and in some cases, millions of units. I do however, think it's ironic that perhaps one of the finest ever Bass music videos is actually a clip for the R&B/hip hop crossover hit, "Rump Shaker" by the Teddy Riley-produced Wrecks-in-Effect.

Now for the real quandry: What about the politics of women in Bass music and it's culture? Well, I have no real defense to offer. Only these thoroughly unqualified thoughts: The dances performed by women in Bass music could arguably be traced from ancestral African tribal lineage. The celebrated shape of a "Bass booty" body draws more on a realistic female image than the waif ideals which distort the high fashion pages and runways. Furthermore, many of our field reporters witnessed a variety of women enjoying (and expressing) themselves freely at Bass functions. Other then this, I can only state that we at Grand Royal do not condone or enjoy misogyny or discrimination on any level (And just because a woman chooses to wear a thong, no one has a right to interpret that as an invitation to harassment). But, for the sake of comparison/devil's advocacy, does that mean we should also not cover Hip Hop, which can be equally if not possibly more destructive?

Without further ado, I'd like to encourage you all to enjoy our Bass tribute, as well as the music, and the videos, with a sense of humor. This section is far from being the end-all last word on Bass music, or culture. I'm sure there's plenty we missed. But there is also plenty that we captured. From simple how-to instructionals, to history, to Tick's "fear and loathing" for the Bass generation, to one-on-one interviews. From Miami, to Atlanta, to the universe, a dedication to all the rump shakers, and all the sound quakers: Please, just "Shake your rump."

—Mike Diamond



The Road To Miami Bass: A historical perspective

Circa 5,000 B.C.: The Tequesta Indians rule South Florida. The are reportedly partial to drinking wood alcohol, ritualistic dancing and thong briefs. Bass culture is born. **1513:** Spanish explorer Juan Ponce De Leon, the first European on the peninsula, claims Florida for Spain. Rumored to take "dip dips" in the fountain of youth. **1870:** Things get juicy. Citrus fruits, Florida's most important (edible) products, are introduced by Spanish settlers. **1783:** Florida's first newspaper, The East Florida Gazette, is established in Saint Augustine (already the continent's oldest European settlement). Larry King is licensed columnist. **1821:** Spain cedes Florida to the United States, although the U.S. Government designates it "a home or shelter only for bears or for men little elevated above bears." Yeah, and what of it? **1823:** Seminole Indians defected. Indians devise long-term plan to soak the white man dry economically through negotiated gambling. **1853:** University of Florida established in Gainesville. First Spring Break follows eight months later. **June 24, 1898:** The first of 7,300 U.S. troops arrive in Miami at the start of the Spanish-American war. They are so impressed with the non-stop pantyotosphere that one soldier claims "If I owned both Miami and Hell, I'd rent out Miami and live in Hell." **1916:** Carl G. Fisher opens the Dixie Highway linking Chicago to Miami and inciting a boom on Fisher's development, Miami Beach. **1925:** Florida's first radio station in Miami. Most early radio consoles not equipped to handle booty music. **1926:** One of the first recessions in Miami Beach. Coral Gables, is built. It will eventually be purchased by rock n' roll fashion maven Gianni Versace. **20s/30s:** Deco style architecture builds up twenty blocks of the original Miami Beach, now known as South Beach. **1928:** First Marx Brothers film The Cocoanuts lampoons Florida land boom. **1949:** Florida's first TV station in Miami. Desi Arnaz's Peep Show airs briefly, replaced by Larry King Live when FCC visits. **50s:** Golden era of the bombastic Fountainbleu Hotel, a refugee center for Jews following the horrors of WWII. **1959:** Castro takes over Cuba. Monied Cubans start to take over Miami. **1960:** Kennedy-Khrushchev beef incites Bay Of Pigs, but brings home no bacon. **1961:** First U.S. manned space flights launched from Cape Canaveral. Astronaut Roger Healy, trapped in jammin bottle, misses flight. **1964:** Cassius Clay defeats Sonny Liston in Miami Beach. Beatles meet Clay the week before. Neither has any influence on the coming Bass music boom. **ALSO:** South Beach's Bass Museum opens to the public. Unfortunately, it just sports a bunch of muddy old oil paintings, with not one photo of an oversized booty in a thong bikini. **1968:** First spacecraft to land man on moon. Apollo 11, launched from Cape Canaveral on July 16. Astronaut Tony Nelson misses flight because he is dressed like a chicken. **1971:** Walt Disney World opens. It's already A Small World, but it gets smaller when half the weekends in the state are paved over to create Orlando, home of Theme. **1977:** State capitol moves to Tallahassee to avoid Auto sound lobbyists. **1980:** Ratings surges in Miami's black community due to tensions from Cuban immigration and the acquittal of four white cops accused of beating to death a black businessmen. First documented use of

STARRING...
MAGGOTRON!
KID ROCK!
DJ MAJIC MIKE!
BOOTY MODELS!
DJ LAZ!
LUKE!
BEAT DOMINATOR!
BO!
CARL FISCHER!
DJ SHADOW!
RAHMING!

phrase "The cars that go boom." 1981: Gianni Versace opens first U.S. boutique in tony Miami suburb Coconut Grove. 1982: Afrika Bambaataa and the Soulsonic Force drop "Planet Rock" on the new (orange) Tommy Boy label. Revolution starts here. Early-Mid 80s: Euro/Brazilian thong bikinis make first widespread appearances on Miami Beach. Outrage fuels their popularity and ensures permanence. 1984: Miami Vice debuts on national TV, reminding nation that the retirement magnet has its share of sleaze—if only on Don Johnson's beard. Guests stars will include Pam Grier and the Fat Boys. 1988: Year One of the Bass sex brings arguably the first Bass records. MC ADE's "Bass Mechanic" and "Bass Rock Express." Almost immediately, 2 Live Crew drop "Throw The 'D'" (recorded in Riverside, CA), on new partner Luther Campbell's Luke Skywalker Records. 1988: Unofficially the first year fluorescent colors overtake popularity of pastels in the Florida retail garment industry. 1989: 2 Live Crew drop double-vinyl As Nasty As They Wanna Be. Despite meaningless "clean" version, the controversy gets even hotter. Quartet thanks every member of their fan club by name on back cover. Strangely, Geraldo Riviera and the talk show brigade are not acknowledged for their part. June, 1989: Danny D & D.J. Wain release "Boom! I Got Your Girlfriend" as a response to MC Lascious' "Boom! I got your boyfriend." Innaugurating one of the best he said/she said rap wars since "Roxanne Roxanne." 1990: Tabloid furor over 2 Live alerts George Lucas, who slams cease'n'desist suit on Skywalker records, additional 'y' he damned. 2 Live gives in, but cries not on new Luke Records signs deal with Atlantic. Springsteen gives group his blessing to release "Banned In The U.S.A." 1990: Island Records owner Chris Blackwell buys the Marlin Hotel in South Beach and has it redesigned fadding a recording studio by Barbara Hulanicki. The second MBeach boom is on. 1991: Madonna is photographed in and around Miami Beach and Coconut Grove in various compromising positions (especially when she lets Vanilla Ice touch her no-nos) for her Sex book. Thong sizes get even smaller. Early 80s Modern science introduces the amazing breakthrough of under-car neon. Slow rollin' takes on a new level of style. 1992: Versace moves into his South Beach villa, joining neighbors Madonna and Sly Stallone. Versace couture boutique is just around the corner. Summer, 1993: Bass music hits a booty-bumping high on 95 South and their immediate immitators, Tag Team, release "Whoot! There It Is" and "Whoomp! There It Is" respectively. Media attempts to incite a feud, but no one gripes—they're all getting paid. Dutes also drops the poorly-spelled but otherwise exemplary "Dassy Duke." May, 1994: The Artist Formerly Known as Popular buys the defunct gay nightclub Paragon and turns it into one of his patented purple chints-covered Glass Slams. Less than three years later, he closes it down and tries to sell it off, without much luck. 1998: Quad City DJs offer to "Come On Ride It (The Train)." Millions climb aboard. 1999: The Year Bass Broke! 1999: Madonna, Bush, Smashing Pumpkins, Tony Bruxton, Luciano Pavarotti, and other chart topping artists release Miami Bass influenced tracks to widespread rump-shaking acceptance.

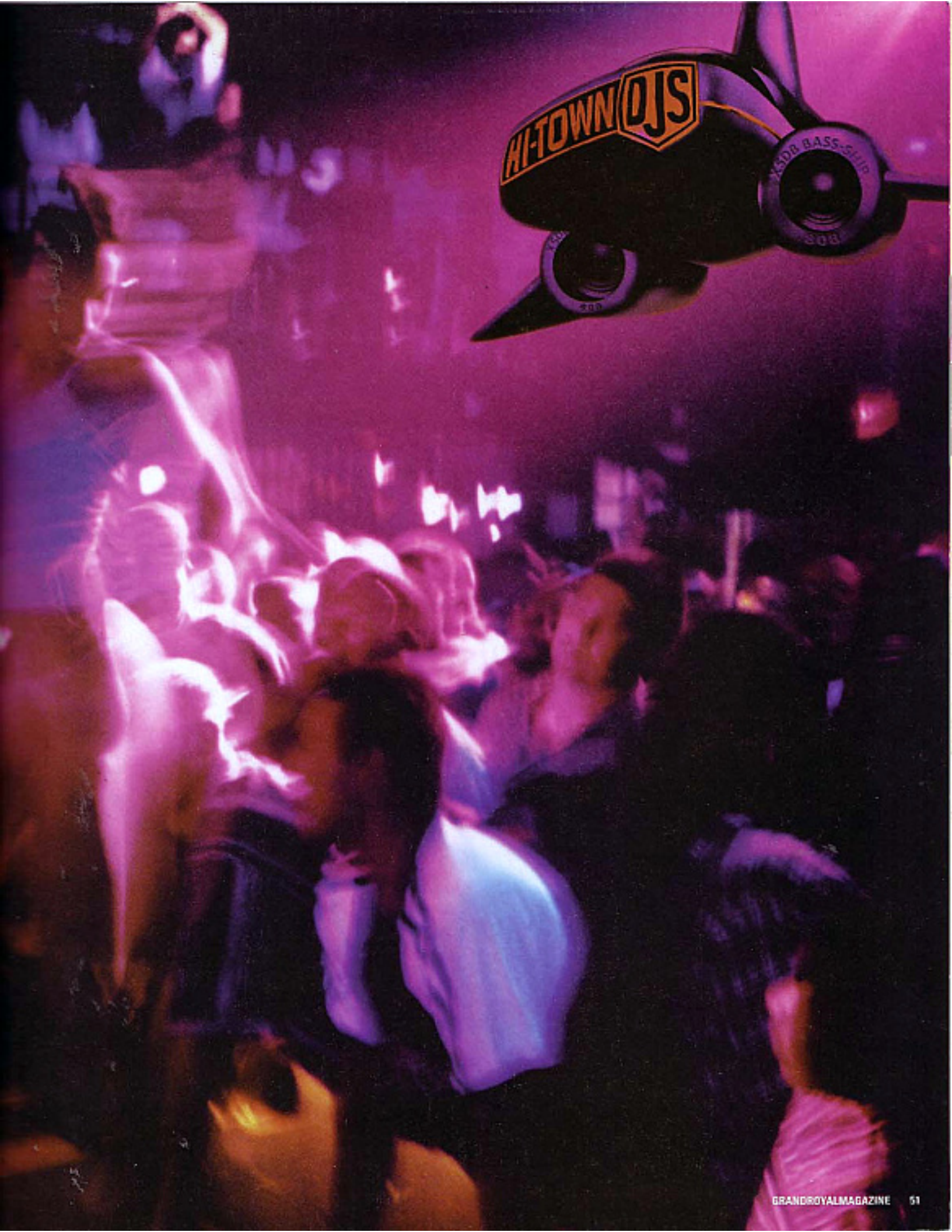
RESEARCHED AND DISTORTED BY D. CATALANO, L. DENNEN, M. DIAMOND, E. GLADSTONE.

INDIANA TICK

in the TEMPLE OF BOOM

Words & Images by Kenneth Salcido

My story begins on a warm Thursday afternoon when The Minister of GR Magazine approached my corner, leaned over my desk, and with a slight grin, asked how I felt about "traveling on short notice." My mission, if I chose to accept, was to experience the Miami Bass first hand. You know, that ass wigglin', x-rated, rump shakin' type shit! I was to hang with Mr. Derrick Rhaming of the Hi-Town DJs in Miami, blend in and soak up the whole Bass experience. Could I, The Tick, keep up with true Miami Playas, who have the power to move their asses in positions I have never dreamed possible?


HI-TOWN DJS

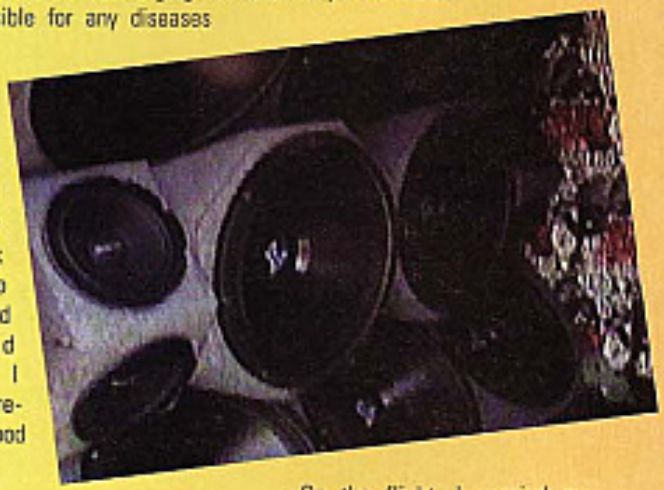
Before I committed, I decided to drop a call to Derrick. On the phone, we hit it off right away. He was way cool, and very excited that I might come down to "Ill Town" and check the vibe. It was obvious Derrick would be more than just a tour guide. The man had mad history, and mad fucking clout! This man was a Bass Booty Legend! Back in '87, he was part of a group called Afro-Rican. They dropped a hit single entitled "Give It All You Got," which still gets mad play at Booty clubs worldwide (and appears on the current chart comp Booty Mix 2). Now, not only is he a member of the Hi-Town DJs, but he also has his own production team by the name of "Collective Works," and his own indie label, Hip Rock. Apparently, booty shakers are down with DIY too!

I got the sense this man had his shit together and made very calculated moves. One smooth Mother Fucker. He then said, "Yo Tick, If you gonna roll, I need to know one thang...Do you drink?" Something in the way he said that made me know I was in for some ill shit. I replied "No doubt," and he said, "Well, then we gonna have a good time!" Derrick asked, "Boy, do you know the measurements?" (meaning the size of

Four Views of the Bass Ship

Booty I was about to see), and elaborated on the kind of shit that was on point with the Spice Channel (which by the way, had been cable-blocked by my father Poppa Tick many moons ago)! Lastly, he requested that my hotel be changed from Miami to Ft. Lauderdale. "If you want to fully feel what the Bass scene means to a Hi-Town DJ", he insisted, "then you must stay in Ft. Lauderdale." He said he and his vehicle (which he claimed had an ill system) would meet me at baggage claim.

It was on! With the faith of GR on my shoulders—after The Minister had me sign a waiver acknowledging that Grand Royal would not be responsible for any diseases contracted—I rushed home and packed my flyest gear. From my black Kangol to my leopard striped briefs, I would represent my hood like Tupac.

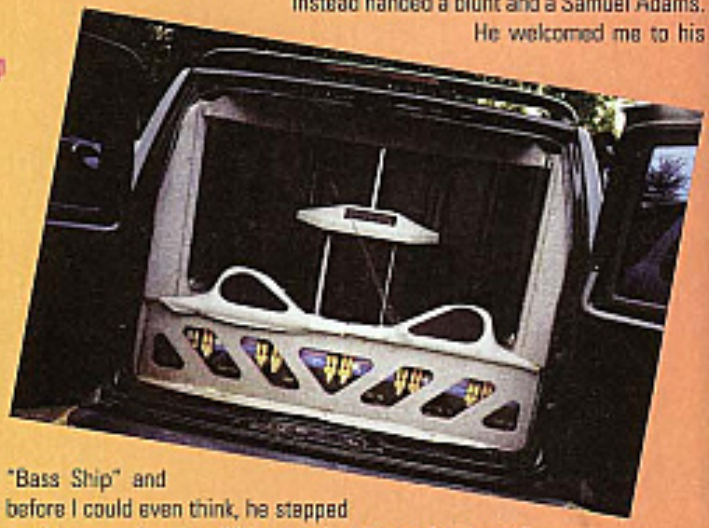


On the flight, I worried my drinking skills would not be up to par. I figured I had a good five hours before I landed in Miami, which was plenty of time to get my drink on. This was a serious Jedi training session. By the time I landed, I was pretty faded, yet confident that I could uncover the "Art of moving butts".

Now the only visual I had on Mr. Derrick Rahming was off the cover an Afro-Rican twelve inch, where he sported a mohawk with lines drawn up the side of his dome. At the baggage claim, I picked up my gear and scoped for the legendary Afro-Rican, noticing a very tall Puerto Rican gentleman glaring at me. I made eye contact with this gold-toothed Brother Marquis-looking gentleman and quickly thought I was about to be bitch slapped on some Tony Montana Mafia shit. He smiled and asked if my name was Kenny (my alias), from Grand Royal, then picked up my luggage, and said Mr. Rhaming was waiting outside in his vehicle.

As I followed the large gentleman out of the air conditioned airport and into the humidity of Florida, I witnessed an incredible sight. I saw the most illest vehicle ever: an airbrushed black astro van, the windows, absolute pitch black from the most incredible tint job I have ever seen. The license plate read "HIP ROCK."

My large friend, named Alex, guided me toward this vehicle and slid the back side door open to reveal a wall of speakers—forty two, I later learned. I got in and extended my hand out to shake Derrick's, and was instead handed a blunt and a Samuel Adams. He welcomed me to his



"Bass Ship" and before I could even think, he stepped on the gas and my head hit a speaker. It was fucking on!

My crash course in ghetto-gonzo kicked in, and I wasted no time in rocking the first of my four vital tools, the mighty Dictaphone, towards my hosts. Derrick is a very stylish yet modest African American male: "I hate when people introduce me as Derrick From Afro-Rican. My friends just call me Dee." Right from the get go he had a "been there done that" attitude. He spoke about growing up in Ft. Lauderdale, his early days with Afro-Rican and how his life has come full circle with Hi-Town DJs. He has a steady girl and always gives props where props are due: He said a Mr. Matt Young was responsible for the inception of the DJs and mentioned his partner Tease. Derrick explained that Hi-Town DJs is not your average Booty group. Tease is from Hawaii and they have a style called "Soul Booty." Both Derrick and Alex—an ex-New York hip hop DJ and very close friend of Derrick's—declared Miami to be off the hook!

Derrick let me know right from the get go that people in the Bass scene party hard, but that a Bass party is not a rave, meaning that Bass kids have

cleaner fun. "Yo Tick, when you actually go to the clubs you'll see for yourself," he said. "I can only speak for myself and my crew, and we love to party, but we all take our business seriously!" Now that he is in the prime of his Booty career, he explained, he spends most of his time these days bouncing from one studio to the next. "I'm in the performance environment, so I don't see much of this."

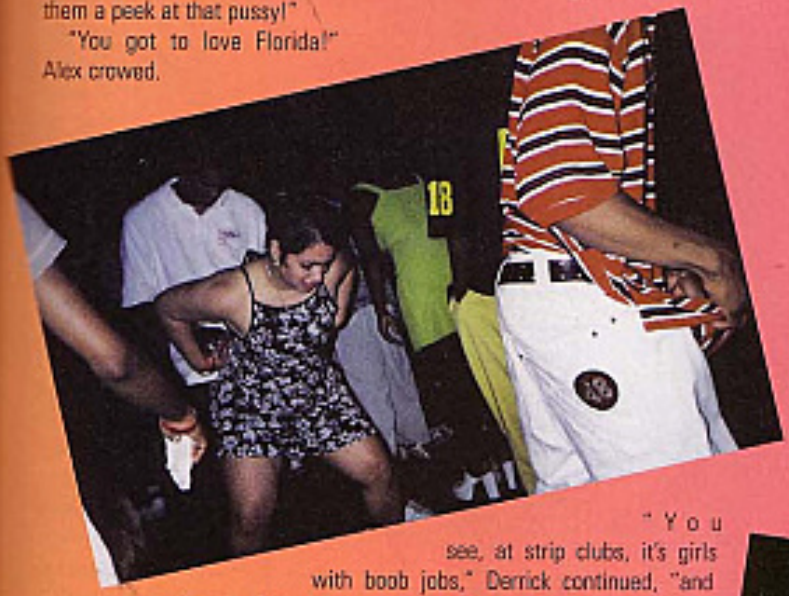
"These kids come in to clubs and want to shake their ass!" he exclaimed. Some kids may rock drugs, like in any scene, and he made it clear that some of the things I will see may seem unbelievable at times, but the majority of these people are bumping and grinding in just a natural mack daddy sex mode.

"My boy DJ Laz throws the bomb booty club," Derrick said. "You want to see butt ass naked women, we go there!"

"Do girls get butt naked on stage?" I asked.

"Butt ass naked!", Derrick declared. "Even on a bad night, it's always a peep show. Sometime you see a girl with real short shorts, she might not pull them off, but she'll turn her ass to the crowd, and give them a peek at that pussy!"

"You got to love Florida!" Alex crowed.



"You see, at strip clubs, it's girls with boob jobs," Derrick continued, "and they don't show you shit. But then you go to a Booty club, it's the next shit!" These men are Professional Party Animals.

While they kept the beer and other flavors coming, Derrick continued bumping booty tracks through all forty two speakers. The sound was amazing! I felt as if I was about to be ripped to shreds....as if I was going through warp speed. Derrick broke it down to two central elements: beats and booty. He lowered the music and told me to get ready. He bumped what he called "Bass", which he explained had very little vocals. It blared right in my ears and I screamed "Daaaamn!" Then he bumped "Booty." Booty had more vocals.

To Rahming, it's a whole different ball game in Miami. He said Miami Bass is now a culture, and Florida is now the undisputed home of booty. It's not like Hip Hop, on some East coast / West coast bullshit. "This is the East Coast, but we are South East."

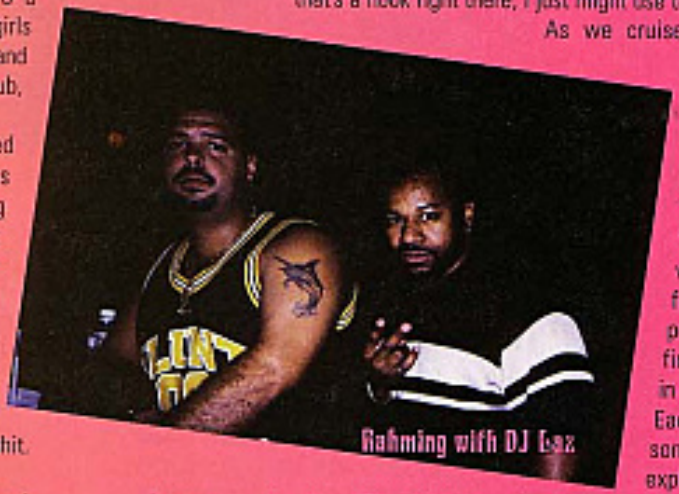
Both Alex and Derrick informed me that they were mad hip hop heads back in the day. "I grew up in Staten Island," Alex said proudly, "people would ask if I ever heard of the Wu-Tang Clan. It turns out they lived a couple of blocks away." Alex used to spin a song called "All of Puerto Rico" by Afro-Rican, a track later used in the movie soundtrack for The Substitute. "I honestly thought Booty music was wack," Alex admits. "I was a Hip Hop DJ and loved old school. What got me into Miami Bass, was how they (the girls) danced to it. I remember going back to New York to a club called Booby Trap. After seeing what I saw in Florida, I stepped to my boy who was the DJ and said, 'Hang it up, cuz this ain't it!'"

"Florida women come with some shit?" I asked.

"Yo!" says Alex, "I could not even crack a hard-on with the girls in New York after seeing what the Booty girls were out in Florida." Alex then met Derrick through his sister and they have been road dogs ever since. "I once saw Derrick rock the greatest show ever," he said, "with Afro-Rican at the Miami Arena. There was 1300 people strong!"

Derrick explained that the Hi-Town DJ's make a living having fun! He broke it down like this, "I take Bass seriously, it puts food on my table and pays the bills, I have to take my shit seriously." He is also a firm believer in consistency. "I want to be a consistent artist, you can count consistency with every success story with all the best teams and coaches. Dan Marino never won a Super Bowl but the man is consistent." He also follows three rules: first you get the money, then you get the power, and then you get the pussy.

We continued to discuss business, parties, sex and Bass on our way up to South Beach. Truly, a conversation for men of the nineties. I told them about a girl I met in L.A. "This girl was named Pauline. Finest girl I ever seen," I said, not realizing the Booty music got to me. Derrick displayed the ability to freestyle booty Bass style to anything I threw at him. "Shit Tick, that's a hook right there, I just might use that for a song!"



Rahming with DJ Laz

As we cruised around, we bumped Hi-Town hits like "Ring-A-Ling," "I Got Money," and "Do You Wanna Ride," we guzzled the finest beer, and peeped the finest women in all of Miami. Each Hi-Town song, he explained, is about every day life. "Ring-A-Ling," for example, means "Gimme a ring if you want some dick," Derrick said with such enthusiasm. He was also very pleased when I knew

verses of his tracks. The vibe was going great.

Now from my Bass Ship view, I observed mad girls in many colors and sizes. We drove down the strip and the ladies be jocking. When Derrick asked if I knew the measurements, he was not fucking kidding. Fuck Crockett and Tubbs! These guys came correct!

My high was cut short though when all of a sudden Alex and Derrick noticed a police officer behind us. "Uh Dee," said Alex, "There's a cop right behind us!" Derrick replied: "He saw me, didn't he?" Putting away the party favors, Alex said "I believe he did!" The Tick had to add fuel to the fire, speaking into my Dictaphone: "We are getting pulled over now." Dee looked over his shoulder and shook his head.

As we were confronted by the police officers, Derrick switched into "Marvin Gaye smooth brutha' mode". He began to talk to one officer and told him I was "a buddy from LA in town, I was just showing him around, and we just barely cracked open the beers." At this point, I was shitting in my pants and clutched my emergency numbers just in case I was to be arrested. Especially when Derrick straight out said "Go ahead and check out the car." Luck was with me: one of the officers apparently had done body work and Derrick let him scope all the special features of the Bass Ship. The officer looked at his partner and said "Damn would you look at this shit!" With the rims glistening under the warm Miami sun and the air brushed body kicking, the officer gave in. "Just empty the beer, guys," was all he said. We thanked them, and the Miami PD let us pursue destiny.

Tick with Rahming

We cruised to a spot called Coconut Grove where all the high class honeys kick it, and stopped into this dope little joint called "Cafe Tu Tu Tango", where we had an all-you-can-eat-buffet. What more can you want? Good food, great beer, cool company, and a bomb vehicle that gets jocked everywhere you go. I even witnessed an attractive woman walk up to the Bass Ship and ask Derrick where he had his body paint done on his car. And: "Are you a musician?"

"Yes, actually I am," he replied.

"How come I don't know you?"

"You will. Just remember Hi-Town DJs!" he snapped.

"I have a beautiful singer form Australia, but he does not do Hip Hop." ("Now let's hope she doesn't mean Ben Lee," I thought)

Derrick responded, "That doesn't matter. You think all I do is hip hop?" He asked if she had a demo and how many songs it contained, took her number, and we were off.

We then checked into my hotel, the Ft. Lauderdale Doubletree. My room was the fucking bomb! It had a living room, a balcony, and a kitchen. We chilled there very briefly and partied a little bit before we broke out.

Derrick informed me that if I was to experience the true spirit of Miami Bass, I must attend a strip bar. Not just any strip bar, but the tightest strip bar in the Bass scene, Ecstasy. Derrick insisted, "You could never fully understand Bass until you witness black pussy shaking to Bass."

I entered the almost entirely African-American club, rolling with a very large Puerto Rican kid and a Miami Bass living legend. I was safe like a kitten, and I was treated like a king! When they found out I was a reporter, the owner of the club gave us the best table in the house and sat with his arm around me (I think, just to let everyone know I was OK). Hinies (ass) and heinies (Heineken beer) were in effect all night. I was entertained by a very gorgeous woman who honed in on our table. She was in her early twenties, had very long, firm legs, green eyes, and dark skin. She kept rubbing her thighs and her cleavage was busting. When Derrick's music began bumping through the speakers, she then masturbated and shook her booty uncontrollably to the sound of Miami Bass. Another more plain, but fully buck, African American girl even got so ill as to stare right into my eyes, proceed to stick her finger in her vagina, then her mouth and then her rectum, in that order! All the while, Derrick (ever the businessman) is just going off about elements of Bass.

"The Bass is not an East Coast thing, it is a South East thing!" He claimed he possessed the gift to actually know a girl is Southern by the shake of her ass. He could tell the girls who fronted and the ones who really were down for Bass.

"Can you really tell?" I asked.

"Hell yeah, Tick. See that girl up there rubbing up against that pole? Look at the way she shakes that ass." Up and down, pelvic thrusts. Up and down. Not the Real Thing, but an incredible stimulation. Uh, simulation. "No girl from out of town can do that," Derrick continued. "It's a Southern thing!"

We then bounced to a club called Zippers, hosted by DJ Laz, a very respected figure in the Bass scene who also hosts radio show on the commercial FM station Power 96. As we rolled into the parking lot, the attendants recognized the infamous Bass Ship, and apparently all knew Derrick. They guided us in for a landing, and gave us the prime spot right at the very front of the club. Being that he is who he is, Derrick convinced the doorman to let me in (free of charge) with the second of my tools, a very special camera dubbed "the dick cam," with a special stealth scope on top!

Of course, we continued to get treated very well. As we strolled into a club that was one thousand persons strong, my attention was instantly thrown to Laz, who yelled to the crowd that "Afro-Rican was in the house!" The whole crowd all looked our way and cheered wildly. I was introduced to Laz by Derrick. "This club ain't for the timid!" Laz warned, as I rocked the Dictaphone for a quick Geraldo trip:

Tick: What's this club all about?

Laz: Partying and Pussy! I've been doing this shit for years.

Tick: Do these clubs bring a lot of violence?

Laz: We get our occasional fight, but there is no guns up in here. Our security is tight.

Tick: What's your take on the Miami Bass scene?

Laz: Look kid, just like I told ya, partying! You'll see for yourself in a couple of hours, the girls get crazy. They shake their ass and their pussy. Kids from all over pay good money for good clean fun.

Tick: Clean fun. Are drugs a factor?

Laz: What? You from LA? This ain't a rave.

Tick: They do come to party though?

Laz: Yo! These kids are just having mad fun. It's ten thousand strong a week.

Tick: What's the ratio between guys and girls?

Laz: I'd say seventy percent is women! Fine women. You'll see!

No doubt. The man was a great host—I had unlimited Long Island Iced Teas all night. I took the third of my special tools out, the trusty steno pad, just looked around the club and let my hand go off in a rage! I wrote: "There are more ladies shakin' their booty here than I could have possibly imagined." And: "The scene of these people bumping and grinding would make even R. Kelly shy away."

"Look at this shit!" said Alex. "You won't see shit like this anywhere else."

"Yo!" I said, as "Puerto Rico" by Frankie Cutlass came on, "I think that Honey is scoping you..."

Immediately, Alex was in Mack mode. The man was poetry in motion and continued to grind and peck this woman on her cheek and neck. All the while a very disturbed gentleman stood by and watched. The gentleman turned out to be a very special male friend of hers. However, he did nothing, as his future wife continued to pump up against Alex to the sounds of Bass! Song after song, Alex continued to break this woman's very will!

"She's here with her fiancee," Alex told me a bit later, "but she is down to get ill! He was about to leave the club, and she said 'I can never forgive myself' and ran off crying."

Mad drama! A potential marriage broken up by Bass!

I then spied this very attractive Cuban girl with a great smile dancing wildly with her friends. I approached her, asked her name, and she said "Lisa," in the most slurred speech I have ever heard. She let me conduct a very short Q & A:

Tick: How ya doing!

Lisa: I'm feelin good. I need another beer

Tick: Well, I'll hook you up in just a second [*aww shit!*—ed.]. Now do you mainly go to Booty clubs?

Lisa: What? Do I like Booty? What mag you from again?

Tick: Grand Royal, and I was wondering if you go to these clubs a lot?

Lisa: Fuck yeah! I love this scene, and I love to party all night!

Tick: I see you like to dance.

Lisa: I love Bass. I dance for a living. I like to get naked in front of people.

Tick: Wow! You a stripper? What club do you work at?

Lisa: You never heard of it. I get most of my fun just dancing at these clubs, and having guys touch me all over. I have been going to Booty clubs for years, and this past year I started stripping.

Tick: How do you people stay up? It's pretty late and the dance floor is still hype!

Lisa: I don't know, I love to dance. People here love to party, and drink.

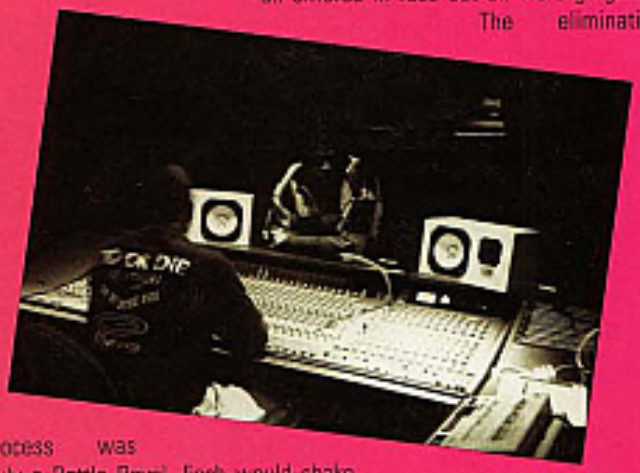
Tick: Anything other than just beer?

Lisa: It depends...Hey let's go dance!

Yo, this girl definitely knows what she wants. "These kids really get off grinding each other" I noted to another Bass DJ named Mark-E-Mark. "Dancing Booty is sex with the clothes on," Mark replied. "The faster the better is the way we like it! Look around you, nobody is going home!"

"This is what Derrick had been talking about!" I thought. Club Zippers was on point. I looked at Derrick and as faded as I was, thanked him for what I had seen! He informed me that if I wanted to experience real Miami Bass Booty, the place to be was at Zippers in his home town of Ft. Lauderdale. I was in good hands. Zippers was truly in a Bass Temple.

At about four in the morning, DJ Laz called us up to the stage to stand by him and witness an actual booty contest. Laz had about seven young girls step on stage to compete for a prize of one hundred dollars. The girls all differed in race but all were gorgeous. The elimination process was truly a Battle Royal. Each would shake her ass in front of the crowd for a few moments until Laz yelled "cut." The contest got iller and each seemed to put all out on the line for the chance to walk out "booty queen" on this glorious night. Laz kept yelling in the mic, screaming and urging the crowd on, all the while telling me, "Hey kid, I bet they don't have this shit in L.A.!"



The contest broke down to two finalists, a Puerto Rican girl who was tall and slender, and a kind of big boned Cuban girl. Laz dropped the Bass for a winner-take-all! Both contestants started to get naked and shake their rump. It was a game of sudden death, and it was all about heart. Whoever wanted it more, would vibrate their ass hard enough, to blow out all in their path. Though the tall Costa Rican girl was far better looking than the small Cuban girl, it was the Cubanita who stripped butt naked and began to throw some of the most death-defying moves I have ever seen. All the while, I am letting the "dick cam" cut loose, snapping shot after shot (in bozack-vision) while, to the average observer, it looked like some kid holding a camera to his crouch and tilting slightly.

Finally, Laz declared the Cuban girl the winner. Clearly, this was not just a beauty contest. Substance did account for something. We all hung with the winner for a bit, then I decided to peep the dance floor some more. I witnessed the club going strong until five in the morning, and felt bad for Laz. Why?

Laz: "In a couple of hours I have to host my morning show. I think I might even squeeze in fishing after the club!"

Me: "Damn. You Booty kids don't stop."

Derrick dropped me back at the hotel, where I got only a couple of hours sleep before he called me in the morning to go jet skiing! The man's energy was phenomenal! I represented also, and told him that I could sleep back at my Grand Royal desk. It was on! Unfortunately, I could only make it as far as the beachside railing before getting queasy.

Later Sunday afternoon, Derrick came around the hotel again to pick me up, with his girlfriend in the car. Not the Bass Ship—he decided to roll in his more stealth mack mode Jetta. (Cont on 106)

PROESS

In which noted authority D. Tomkins, B.D. (Doctorate of Bass) attempts to shed light by mad riffing semi-chronological shout-outs. Take a breath, white boy.

"Trans Europe Express" is the track—ridden from the subways of "Planet Rock" and getting off at "Bass Rock Express" in Miami. **Bambaataa** and Soulsonic's "Planet Rock" is a Miami Bass song, tying South Bronx to the Sunshine State with a waxened lineage of buttfloss. Despite every Lord Finesse punch, the line distinguishing the boom bap from the boom! boom! is thinner than you think. Or between **Furious Five** saying, "Take the train, take the train" in '80 and **Quad City DJs** saying "Ride the Train" in '97.

The Bronx is the "Boogie Down" base model of hip hop, where a Blastmaster named **KRS** freestyles off the head. In Miami, **Debbie Deb** does the Buttblaster, and freestyle music is out the ass.

KRS said "The P Is Free," while **Antiquette** said "Throw That P."

KRS had his "South Bronx" anthem, while the Antiquette AA side had "Miami."

In the Bronx, Booty music is Bad, meaning Wack. In the Southeast, Booty is Bad meaning Whoomp, a quaking treasure buried in the trunk.

For what is the Bass without the "B" for the Bronx? Ass.

The **Soulsonic Force** classic pulsed in up-tempo 808 repetition, as **Arthur Baker** and **John Robie** craft-worked blips, 120something BPMs, and periodic keyboard explosions for good measure.

While 82's "Planet Rock" has the speed, **T La Rock & Jazzy Jay's** "It's Yours" has the slow and low bass. Jazzy Jay's seismic, 808 proofed, low end theorem was the first deafening car jam. "It's Yours" sent vibrations deep south down I-95, bottoming out in Miami, Planet Bass. And it'll frag the pink florescents under your bassboy's mall-crawling minitruck faster than a mutant speed bump.

Long before the call and response hook became Luke's breaded bait, "It's Yours" posed: "If you had it would you flaunt it?" Today, that question would test the Bazooka mettle in a Whiteville Pizza Hut parking lot. Where there ain't shit else to do but find ladies like **L'Trimm's** Bunny D who'll drop that bottom for the cars that go boom. At the $1.50 car wash, systems clash with decibel power—**Kool Herculean** style—to pop a hoochie ear drum when the chrome glints at dusk. Bass music shines its microphone chrome for the regionalized party, a hootenanny crowd cajole long diss-associated from the deft MC engineering that made "It's Yours" so unique. **Special K's** writing and T La Rock's delivery dropped science into the party mix, keeping heads simultaneously nodding and thinking.

As with "It's Yours," **Mantronix's** "Fresh Is The Word" also refused to immolate content for feeling and maintained balance on the wheels. Likewise, **RUN-DMC's** "Together Forever" and **Beasties'** "Awol" can also shatter, smother and cover every fucking Waffle House at every 95 exit with lower-than-low, chrome-rending tremors.

The Roland TR 808 has the true Bass machinations. But the Bass had politic, ditto. Before Luke lured the **2 Live Crew** to Miami, their first single on Hollywood's Macola Records was "The Revelation"—a tinny version of the "It's Like That" beat with one-time-only conscious rhymes by one-time only 2 Liver Amazing Vee. The B was simply "2 Live," re-released as "Beat Box" on their drawer-dropping 2 Live Is What We Are in '86.

Luke Skyywalker (2 'y's) had already made a racket with "Ghetto Jump" under **Krush 2**.

Florida's Pandisc Records also tried combining reality and bass with **Palmerforce Two's** "Street Wars" ('84) which had verses biting **Divine Sounds** who bit RUN-DMC anyway. The "Street Wars" keyboard stabs sounded like—along with everything else—**Cybotron's** "Clear" out of Detroit. **Maggotron** was bitten by the Electro's bug-out beginning in '83, with jams such as "Welcome To The Planet Of Bass," (originally on Jamarc, slogan: "We Got Dat Bottom") "Return To The Planet Bass" and The Bass That Ate Miami album. Both cases owed their ass to Planet's "Rock" and "Patrol," **Hashim's** "Al-Naayfsh (The Soul)," and **Jonzun Crew.** (The Electro connection to Jonzun Crew was further evident in Luke's Pac Jam Publishing.) The difference was **DJ Debonair's** snug incisions and the "throbbic boomulator" baritone courtesy of DXJ a/k/a Maggotron. Pink-labeled Pandisc (who later picked up Maggotron) was also feeling the motor booty on the 9 minute bore, "Invasion From Planet Detroit" ('84).

The Gucci Crew, caught in the act.

Also out of Florida was **Pretty Tony** (Butler)'s freestyle heaving dance beats, '84's "Jam The Box" and "Fix It In The Mix" which relied on soon-to-be-played broken glass effects, warbled vocoder and synthesizers.

Beat Master Clay D and **Tech Master P.E.B.** also kept it low.

4 Sight Records had **MC ADE's** tinnily

R BOOTY

that clapping sound."

—Shock G, "Freaks Of The Industry"

vocoded "Bass Mechanic" ('85) and Gigolo Tony's "Smurf Rock." With Tony's "Old MacDonald" banjo intro and ADE's Zsa Zsa "Green Acres" bite, country time was signified with bass.

Though **Gucci Crew 2** had "Gucci Bass" ('87) after **Schoolly D**'s "Gucci Time," their "Cabbage Patch" shook it rurally (back cover thanks: "Ghetto [sic] Style Party Down, Soul Sonic and Vicious Funk D J s " Represent!). After all, The Gucci Crew 2 album was, per title, So Def, So Fresh, So Stupid.

Once Luke a/k/a Captain Dick sodomized Georgia, Atlanta's bass reacted by spewing lyrical deliverance. A high-pitched Peter "**MC Shy D**" Jones ensured "I Will Go Off" and "Rap Will Never Die" as his Got To Be Tough ('87) and Comin' Correct In '88 albums brought MCing and Atlanta to Luke Skywalker Records (Co-produced by Rodney "**Kool Collie**" Terry and **DJ Man**).

Raheem the Dream's Vigilante ('88 on James Smith's Texas-based Rap-A-Lot) provided Atlanta's Bass with another hero of verbal preservation through non-booty joints like "You're On Notice," "Punks Give Me Respect," and the classic title track.

With a Shy D assist, **Tony Motherfuckin'** (or MF) **Rock**'s "Doin' It" avenged the disdain from New York. His **DJs Toomp** and **Mike Fresh** brought velocity and precision ahead of its time.

If Florida's fastrappin' wasn't exactly "The New Rap Language," Atlanta took a mic stand. Nonetheless, both states—booty and mind—had the baby-backed rib of hip hop creation: DJs that burned rubber on that ass.

Kizzy Rock

At the bottom of Luke's records: "Unauthorized duplication will get you fucked up by the Ghetto Style DJs". Sleight and quick scrawling was the band of the hand, as **Ghetto Style DJs** freaked fingers like Helen Keller with the coked speed of Mercury Morris. It's been advised, "Speed is what you need" on **Grandmaster Flash**'s "Girls Love The Way He Spins." The scratching complimented staccato punched helium voices on instrumental, dub and bonus beat versions. Therein, 2 Live's Treach, **DJ Mr. Mixx** and Orlando's **Magic Mike** lowered the boom. Raw breaks were injected antiseptically over the drum machine's sterile drone.

When Mr. Mixx cuts in "Dance To The Drummer's Beat" on the venerable "Thro' The D" ('86) Ghetto Bass compacted funk chords sound like Sly's band materialized out of thin wax, contrasting with the starkness of the programmed high tsst hat tsst. Mixx punch-phases note bursts amid spitting snare rolls on "What I Like's" scratch version ('85).

His classick "MegaMix 2" ('88) links "It's Great To Be Here," Yellow Magic Orchestra and Vaughn Mason to a choral Bongo Band horn section before closing with the RevRUN: "cause I just made the motherfuckers up last night."

DJ Smurf

Orlando's Magic Mike (Cheetah Records) would later remix "Planet Rock"—giving it a distinctive Florida bounce and whirlwhittling like **Jazzy Jeff** on the Jive Rhythm Track. Mike's scratch speed rivaled Mixx, adding a percussive layer manually. "Drop That Bass" and "Boot The Booty" put Mike as DJ before his less comparable rappers (Cough!) Fresh (Hack!) Prince.

Dynamix 2 placed The Whispers' smooth soul over a gonging bass on "Just Give The DJ A Break" ('87), while Marvin Gaye's "saaay yeeeah" sliced nicely through **Lequaan Love**'s Skywalker joint "Everybody Say Yeah."

DJ Mann—who cut for Atlanta's Shy D and ADE—built on **Cash Money**'s legacy as a transforming demon on "Transformers" and the Laquaan Love B side, "Mega Mix House Style."

The importance of the word "Strip":

As the original drum and bass, the sound was **stripped**. Miami Bass can be heard primarily in **strip** mall parking lots or cruising on the **strip**. In order to enhance the vibratory bass acoustics, **strip** cruisers will often **strip** their interior of seats and unnecessary fabric. In **strip** clubs, the exterior fabric of backseats are removed, and bass provides a fine sound-crack. **Strip** clubs are often auspiciously tucked in the end of **strip** malls. Therein, **strippers** named Destiny and Corvette (the replacement Mary Jane Girl) wrap around striped fireman's poles and **strip** while prancing down the runway **strip**. In fact, the demilitarized **strip** separating **strippers**' orifi is known simply as, "The **Strip**". Which incidentally is barely covered by a thin **strip** of fabric, or thong if you will. Young Skywalker would often use **strippers** onstage at 2 Live shows.

The Importance Of The Word 'Quad.'

If Bass music always revolves around the "phrase that pays" (as one Bass insider puts it), then truly the word that pays must be **Quad**. We've got **Quad** City DJs, Supa**Quad**, and DJ **Quad** making records, we've got hits like the first 95 South record, "**Quad** City Knock" and "**Quad**ism" by Ghostown DJs ... you get the picture.

So what's up with **Quad**? Is it a place? A style? Or a state of mind? Does it refer to the four cities where Bass music is most popular? Or a **Quad** in a university—where Bass music gets played? **Quad**rophonic sound? A **quad**rant of speakers? What the hell is **Quad**??

Actually, according to our insider sources, **Quad** has nothing to do with the Latin root word of **Quad**, meaning four. **Quad** is a slang for bass. Not that anyone calls it Miami Quad Music. But **Quad** is what bass boomers refer to the lowest frequency range of bass as. **Quad** = the boom, the speaker sound that the bass makes, the rumble when the car drives by. Get it got it good. Now, go bump that **Quad**.

—E.G.

At a DMC Championship, **DJ Yoshi** used his member on the fader to highlight those profound **Fresh Kid Ice** words: "Just nibble on my dick like a rat does cheese."

[Fall of '86, I saw my 6'7" Japanese schoolmate, known as DJ Flesh KK, chanting "We want some puuussaay!" in his black Members Only jacket, with sleeves at the 'bows. Only then did I truly begin to appreciate the 2 Live Crew's lyrical genius. Or Luke's wit on the one and one nursery rhyme when he deliberately un-rhymes "10 and 10, she liked my aiyyass in the bedroom"—and for the kinky, "all day and all of the night." In the budding High School assmos'spherical, Full Metal Jacket meant "Me So Horny." The fellas wanted a mic check for the dictaphone, but the only thing getting blown were the speakers. As CoFlow would say, "Release the Krakken, please put down your skinflutes."

Granted, 2 Live Crew misogyny didn't exactly work wonders with the ladies, who were busy rewinding the V. Femmes phrase "why can't I get just one fuck" amid giggles and fluttering blushes. How fucking fitting was it that our faithful cheerleaders jacked 2 Live's zesty "Get It Girl" for their prudent halftime routine—beat, clap and vocal cadence? To ensure that PT n' Aers and booster clubheads smelled the team spirit, the squadrah would slightly lift their polyester skirts with a booty calling "whoot! whoot!" and Ellie May eye-bat for emphasis. Unfortunately, the female response to the music's lopsided leering at their exterior and derrier came in the form of rebuttal patterned from the original. Like the previously mentioned "Throw the P" and "Boom I Got Your Boyfriend." It lacked Shante's ruthless and is

(continued on pg.108)

WHAT MIAMI BASS MEANS TO US

Written "off the dome" on the plane to Florida, by DJ Shadow

In this case, "Us" refers to the West Coast Hip-Hop scene as a whole.

Bass music had always been big in the West. As hip-hop moved from the east to the westward states, like some kind of musical manifest destiny, the influences and cultural peculiarities of infected regions set the stage for a whole generation of what I like to call "hip-hop bastards." Most of us in Seattle, Bay Area, L.A., Phoenix, etc., experienced all different types of hip-hop growing up. Records like "Planet Rock" (the genesis of modern bass music), "Clear" by Cybotron, and "Jam the Box" by Pretty Tony, occupied the same mix tapes that exposed New York's finest. KDAY played it, KSOL played it, KFOX was on it too. DJs that were breaking Planet Rock spinoffs eventually began to dabble in the studio. KFOX's Sir Mix-a-lot Ray (as he was called then) busted out with "Squaredance Rap" and produced other Shannon-esque female uptempo records. DJ Unknown and later, Battlecat, would form pseudonyms like the "X-men" and up the tempo even higher. Even Sway and Tech busted out with one of the dopest bass jams of the time (late 86's), "We Want To Rock You." But undoubtedly the chief ambassadors of Electro Bass-Funk was Uncle Jam's Army. Their freaky tales (and parties) inspired a whole generation of bass enthusiasts and spawned the man most directly responsible for the sensation to come: The Egyptian Lover. His Egyptian Empire introduced the world to Jamie Jupiter (the man himself is an alias) and of course, Rodney O. Meanwhile, The World Class Wreckin' Cru (of course, featuring Doctor Dre) and the Knights Of The Turntables were doing their thing, too.

Sac Town busted out with "Scratch Motion," and Too Short was honing his craft on 99 Girls. Meanwhile, Just-Ice's Mantronik-produced and bass heavy Back to the OLD School LP was selling more copies in San Francisco than in the rest of the West Coast combined. In other words, the bass-wave was spreading.

But what, you say, does this have to do with Miami? The South's obsession with bass can be traced, according to a hypothesis by my man Cut Chemist, to not only "Planet Rock" but also a Roxanne Shante party in '84 when Marley Marl busted out the 808 to an unsuspecting crowd. Whether or not this is indeed the case, by '85 the volume of independent records indicated a tremendously strong regional scene. For me, it all jumped off in a major way with "Throw the Dick" by 2 Live Crew. I remember buying that 12" the same day I bought "South Bronx" by B.D.P. and I actually was feeling 2 Live more. Within the grooves on that mysterious grey label were the sounds that to this day epitomize the best of Miami Bass: top notch, outraged scratching; expert programming; and earthquake bass. (2 Live had, of course already represented from the West on "Revelation" and "What I Like," a true classic.) "Throw the Dick" set it off nationwide for 2 Live and their newest group member, one Luther Campbell. Concurrently, another label with a huge stable of talent emerged: 4 Sight Records. Early releases include "Bass Rock Express" by MC A.D.E., a dope reworking of Kraftwerk's "Trans-Europe Express," like "Planet Rock." 4 Sight also signed Riverside's own Byron Davis and the Fresh Krew, who released two albums and a bonafide classic: "Now Dance." Not to be outdone, and aware of their strong grip on the west, Skywalker picked up MC Twist out of San Jose. Skywalker also released one of the classic Miami Bass albums of all time: MC Shy D's, I've Gotta Be Tough, featuring the Ghetto-Style techniques of DJ MANN later hooked up with Lo Jean Love for a decent LP with above average beats.

Others began to enter the fray in a major way. Beatmaster Clay D busted out several indie singles, including the classic "Boot the Booty" before delivering his debut LP, You be You And I Be Me. Back in the West, Kool Rock Jay and DJ Slice busted out with "Slice It Up" and DJ Battery Brain hit us with "808 Volt Megamix." And in '88, Afro-Rican took Miami Bass to the national charts with "Just Let it Go," the undisputed summer party jam of the year until Young MC knocked 'em off with "Bust A Move." Afro-Rican really set it off for Miami Bass and a slew of imitators set in to claim bank. But by the early '90's, only one name reigned in the bass game: DJ Magic Mike and he made ALL the money. Then Tag Team, 69 Boyz, etc. etc...

I've got to wrap this up now 'cause my flight to Ft. Lauderdale is leaving. (I'm on a beat-mission). But we should appreciate Miami Bass as a very important and legitimate form of hip-hop that has always given a lot to us here in the West (and all over the world). Now here's 10 of my favorites to check out. Even if you weren't there at the time, you should still check these out and pay your respects to the genius of Miami Bass:

1. "Throw the Dick" by 2 Live Crew
2. "Boot the Booty" by Mc Coal Rock and Chezy Chess
3. "Gotta Be Tough" by MC Shy D
4. "Just Give the DJ A Break" by Dynamix II
5. "Now Dance" by Byron Davis and the Fresh Krew
6. "What I Like" by 2 Live Crew
7. "Roll It Up" by Success In 'Effect
8. "Ghetto Bass" by 2 Live Crew
9. "Bass Rock Express" by MC A.D.E.
10. "He is DJ Crush" by Gigolo Tony

a Page of Props

It is written: "In the beginning, there was music... Then came BASS." How true. As the professors tell us, Bass music did not emerge from a void, but developed from many sources. And Bass music has its share of observers and admirers from outside the scene, whether they have been vocal about their approval or not. We thought it appropo to go out into the wide world of wonder and see just what people had to say about the matter:

PRINCE PAUL:

"The one thing I like about Bass music is going to see all the girls at the functions, in their hiked up shorts, stuff so tight you can see everything. The sexual content is dope. The music ... I don't have a problem with it. All you need is an 808 and a chant about booty. To sexually exploit someone, and they're OK with it, just because you've got an 808, that's dope. It's like fishing."

KOOL KEITH:

"When I travelled with Ultra, when I was with Uptown management and Jimmy and Andre had us going on dates to Memphis. I was like 'Damn, my shit is not playing in Memphis, my shit ain't moving in Minnesota, my shit ain't playing in Texas. Goin' down south, you hear sounds change, the radio waves, you hear Magic Mike. I'm talking about when motherfuckers had jheri curls. And they bought records. I started seeing brothers in Atlanta with pickup trucks with woofers, playing Magic Mike, 'Just Another Playa,' 'Handling Things....' I like those records. I just like bass. The 808 is still a good drum to use. If I programmed those drums right now, motherfuckers would say 'Aw, he's buggin,' using those drums, those are old drums that LL used on 'I Need A Beat' or 'Goin' Back To Cali.' There's some narrow fucking minded people out there. I like all that shit. I like every fucking thing. And I'm still a dope fucking rapper!"

KURTIS BLOW:

"Scarcity creates demand, in an economic sense, and the people are ready for something new, at a time when it's most needed. For a while, hip hop was really slow tempo, [in] the realm of gangsta—all the other styles in hip hop got lost. We really needed a sound to come up and create a balance. These guys are making songs that are really creative, witty, it makes you happy, it's more fun. They have a new sound, a new style, it's something to bring back dancing in the clubs. And I think the time is so right for that now."

KID ROCK:

"Miami Bass Music is basement party music, flat out!!! I have spun records at a thousand basement, cabaret and park parties and no one ever got down to "U Be Illin" like the got off to any song on 4 Sight, Luke Skyywalker or Sun Town Records (to name a few). Miami Bass, Booty, Basement party music-whatever u call it, it brings out bitches in biker shorts & g-strings that want to shake that ass, and who ain't down with that shit? Yeah, I know a lot of you cool ass, too hip for your own socket mother fuckers front like you ain't down but know good and damn well you used to request or never turn the channel when any 2 Live Crew video came on Video Jukebox (now called The Box and banned from most markets, not because of Bass Music or it's videos, but because of those Walmart shoppin' religious fucks whose kids usually turn out more fucked up than G.G. Allin). From what I have seen, music of today, especially rap/bass music, not from NYC or LA, is usually deemed not that cool from people in those areas cuz' they're too cool-too hip-know more than all of us 'have more talent shootin' out our piss hole hicks than you ever hope to have mother fuckers in your big cities, with your big producers and record labels fuckin' you up your ass' ... I guess to sum it all up, Miami Bass Music goes Boom ... Boom, Boom, ... Boom-Boom Boom ... Hoes get naked, Fortys get Drank, Hoes get Fucked and Miami Bass Music Rocks like Marion Barry."

DUST BROTHER MIKE SIMPSON:

"When people go out to dance, they just want to have a good time, not be critics. The problem with this whole electronica movement is that the music is for the most part fairly soulless and not funky at all. That's where Bass music has the edge—it's got that driving beat, but it's also got some of the funk. I think there's a growing appreciation in the mainstream, driven by the videos and the dances and the Bass girls. If I were to free associate, if someone said Bass music, I always think of that butt dance that they do. For me, that's pretty much what it's all about. The individual subtleties of each song are secondary to its ability to make girls shake on the dancefloor."

JON MOORE, COLDCUT:

"I spent ages trying to think of something clever to say about Miami Bass, which sort of sums up one take on it. It's a bit like asking 'Who grills the best McDonald's hamburger?' But when the taste police are not looking, we sneak off and suck on that synthetic sound ride in that candy floss car."

JAKE "SQUIRT TV" FOGELNEST:

"This is something I've been hiding for awhile and I think it's time that I let the truth be known: I was one of the original members of 2 Live Crew. In fact, I wrote the lyrics to 'Me So Horny.' I put the band's image together, I was the first guy to suggest that we rub our faces in girls crotches onstage. But I never received any credit for this and here's why—Right before the release of As Nasty As They Wanna Be, I was thrown out of the group. Luther Campbell just thought 'I didn't fit the image of the Crew' and even went as far to say 'I wasn't LIVE enough.' Not to get off on an ego trip, but I was the LIVEST motherfucker in Miami. The rest is history. 2 Live Crew became huge. Luther has a successful solo career. I'm left with nothing, but some broken dreams and a couple cases of hot oil that I never got a chance to use."

JERMAINE DUPRI, CEO OF SO SO DEF:

"Man, I just put out the shit."

The opinions expressed on this page are not necessarily those of Grand Royal.

Bass Tech 101 (or 808)

The Dust Brothers talk to Bass producer Tony Mercedes (Tag Team "Whoomp! There It Is," Duice, "Dazzy Duks,"69 Boyz, etc) about the tricks of the trade

Introduced and (barely) Moderated by Eric Gladstone

It's a well-hidden fact, but secretly Dust Brothers Mike Simpson and Jon King—producers of the Beasties, Hanson, Vince Neil, Tone Loc and others—are ALL ABOUT THE BASS. "I was born in Florida," says King, "so I feel a kinship."

Even more to the point, says Simpson, "We got into Bass music pretty early because 2 Live Crew came out of Riverside and they were fans of our radio show, so they used to send us their early records, test pressings, and they were popular in '85 with our fans in Pomona."

Says King, "The first Bass records we heard were from like San Bernadino, Riverside, and from New York: Original Concept." Mike adds MC Shy D. Jon nods to MC A.D.E. "It seems like it evolved somewhat organically from influences both East and West coast," Simpson figures.

"We put together a Bass track, in 1987," Simpson continues, as King loads up the legendarily rumored DAT. The track is rough by Dust standards, but clearly a bumpin' beat. Apparently, it evolved into the basis for Young MC's "Bust A Move," Says Mike, "I think its Beck's favorite Dust Brothers song." But wait, there's more. "This is our Bass mix of Nitzer Ebb," says Mike as Jon rolls another DAT, playing a genuinely "Planet Rock"-derived track, augmented by diva backups, which works amazingly well under Nitzer's corny psuedo-post-Ikulsus vocals. "They pressed them up and the band hated it, so they had to recall the 12 inchers," says Simpson. "They became a collector's item."

"I'm ready to watch some Bass videos," says King. Not yet, Jon, not yet.

Mike Simpson: So, tell us, Tony, what's the secret to making Miami Bass records?

Tony Mercedes: It's really [just] Bass records now. The Miami stereotype, five or six years ago, that would've been the proper terminology to label the music we do. But right now, the bigger Bass groups are coming out of Georgia, going as far back as "Dazzy Duks," which I did—Duice is out of Augusta, Georgia. 12 Gauge is out of Augusta, Georgia. Tag Team's "Whoomp! There It Is," they're out of Atlanta.

MS: Is there a specific sound that you can attribute to each region?

TM: I just think Bass music took a different approach as opposed to the constant hammering and chunks and chunks of low end, spicing it up with R&B type things in it, as you can see in "My Baby Daddy" and the FreakNasty "Dip" record. I think a lot of the rappers out of Miami, didn't adapt to that. That's no indication that one is more superior to the other...

MS: So, the Miami sound has less of the R&B and more of the constant hammering of the low end?

TM: Yeah.

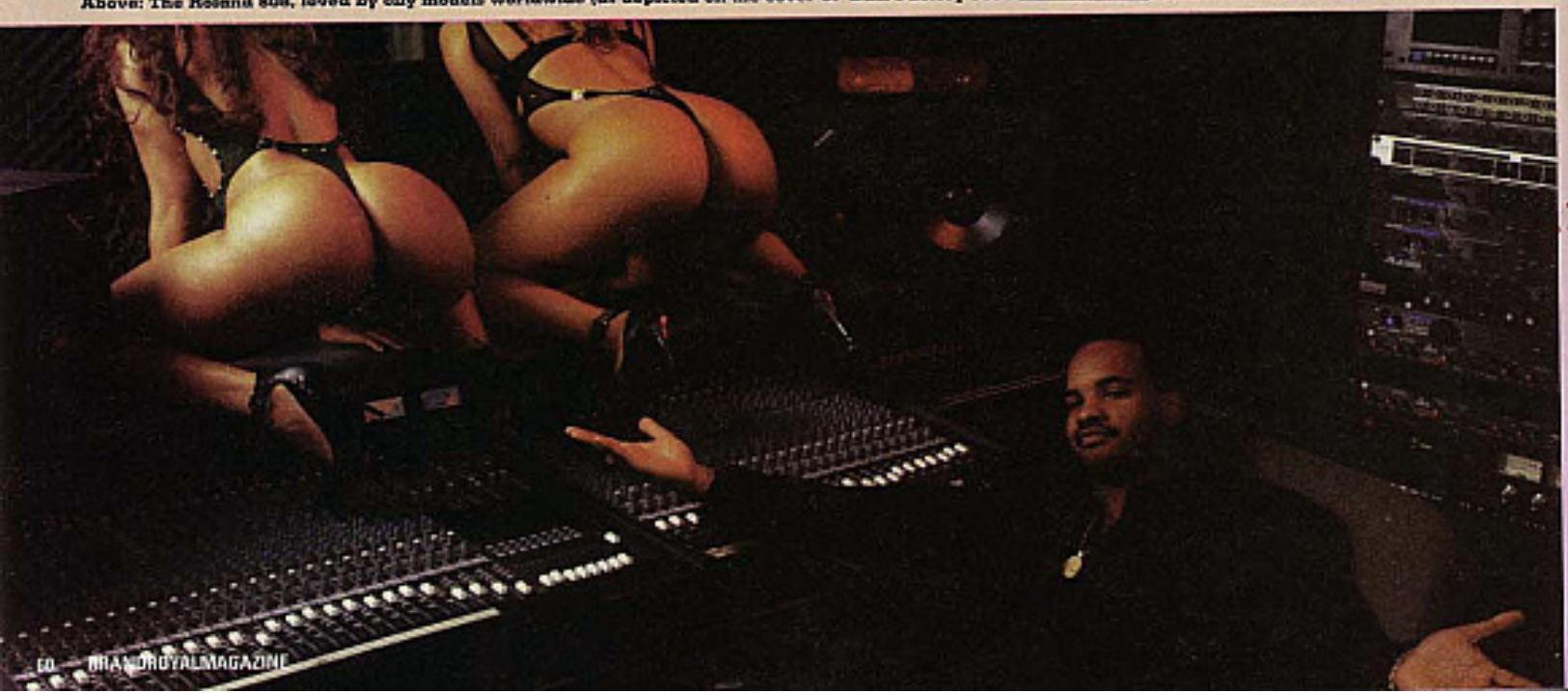
MS: How has the audience changed from the early days of Bass records?

TM: Well, in its early stages, Bass music was an urban music. But now I'm seeing the racial mix of black and white, they're neck and neck. Especially with an explosive record like "Da Dip" or "Dazzy Duks" or Tag Team, those records could not have done the numbers they did just as an urban record. A good comparison is the difference between the "Whoomp! There It Is" record from Tag Team and the "Whoot! There It Is" record from 95 South. Both records are saying the exact same thing, except the beat from 95 South was definitely an urban feel. You can see the difference in numbers in six million [Tag Team] compared to two million [95 South] [Editor's note: 95 South's label Intersound disputes these high estimates, but concedes Tag Team sales doubled 95 South]. I have to look at all those things as we're putting a record together to target a certain demolgraphic] without losing black radio. Sometimes you lose black radio and pop radio is not ready to accept that particular sound.

MS: It seems like this is one of the biggest forms of dance music right now. What kind of dance is out right now?

TM: Well, for Tony Mercedes and some of the projects that I get involved with, it's more ... not dance orientated. You can find a trend and jump on the band wagon and do a song that is a trend-setter about a dance that's a winner. Since dance records are hard sellers from a radio perspective, I now make more radio friendly records based on those catchy choruses

Above: The Roland 808, loved by oily models worldwide (as depicted on the cover of Bass Factory 808's It's Bass Time). Below: Mercedes and "Friends".



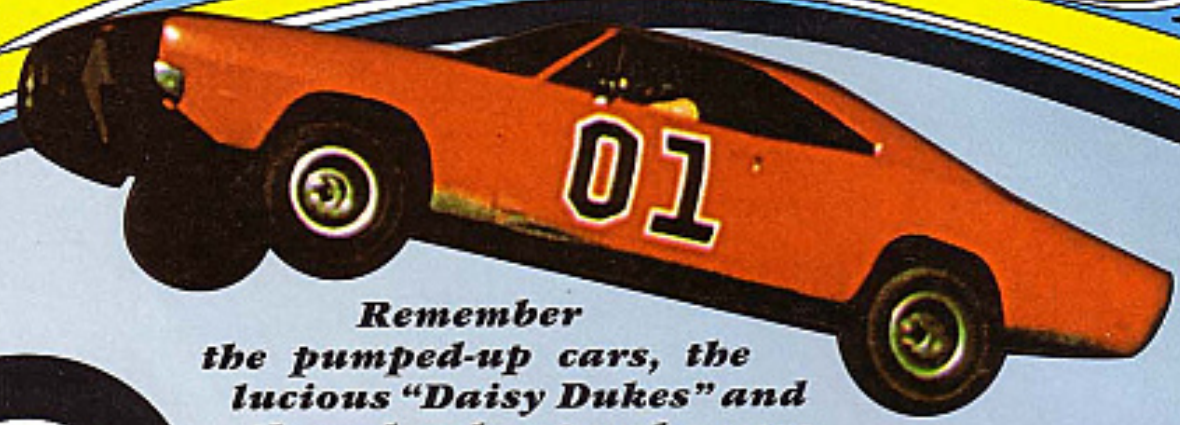
believe it or not.
John King, MS: [cackles]
TM: And Mercury, they lost their minds. They were blown away by their little amigos placed on top of bumpin', urban black track. But it worked. I think that we're gonna see more R&B acts putting more heavier Bass tracks on their albums. 'Cause in the Bass movement, we have a built-in audience that are dedicated Bass fans, and Bass consumers. So, take an R&B artist that is just mediocre, and take one of those tracks not based on vocal ability but based on your ability to get it on the dance floor, and you'll get some attention.
Grand Royal: You did a Bass remix on Hanson? Since that's these guys record, I'm really wondering what you did to make it a Bass mix?
TM: I took the acappella and skillfully placed it onto a bumpin' Bass track that could hold your attention even without the vocals. It was something new for them, and the people at Mercury said 'You'd be surprised at the producers we paid a lot of money for remixes, but everybody liked the Bass remix.'
MS: Do you like doing remixes?
TM: I love doing remixes, I love taking somebody else's work, splicing it up just to see what kind of different feel I can get. Really, I like taking a marginal record and making it better.
MS: Could you imagine doing a Bass remix of a country song?
TM: Yeah... No. Country music, I wouldn't touch it. Because I think the marriage is excellent there.
MS: Hanson makes a lot of sense, but it's also a crazy idea. Have you ever done any remixes for other pop or alternative bands that seemed crazy but surprisingly worked?
TM: No, this is the first. I want to do remixes on some rock and roll stuff, remixes on Madonna or Michael Jackson type stuff. Because we've got a built-in fan base, and if you don't explore the fan base, how do you know? If "Whoomp! There It Is" sold eight million records (now it's eight million?—Accounting Ed.), that means there's 8 million people who appreciated it. Take someone, like Michael Jackson right now is struggling, even though it might not make sense, let's do a Bass remix just to see what it would do. We don't have shit to lose.
MS: Let me ask you, Is there any one piece of gear that you could not live without, in order to make Bass records?
TM: There are several. Two of the most popular are of course the MPC 3000 or 2000 and the SP 1200, still. I frequently use them.
JK: Why use the SP1200 if you have the MPC?
TM: It has some of the original Bass sounds, that feel, which some producers have worked on for so many years and feel comfortable with. Me personally, I don't use it.
MS: You use the MPC? Do all your sounds come off the MPC or do you use other sound modules too?
TM: Exactly. I bring in keyboard riffs and guitar riffs but the meat of the track comes from that.
MS: How long does it take you to do a remix?
TM: Not long, a day, two days.
MS: What about a song from scratch?
TM: Same. There was a record, a cover of "Poison Ivy," they did that in about 30 minutes. Hot record.
MS: Is is usually just you putting the track together in the studio, then the vocalists come in.
TS: Yeah. We kind of like everybody to be in there during the inception, so you can know what the track should have.
MS: What's the recording medium—24 track? A-DAT?
TM: A-DAT. It depends on the feel you want. A lot of people say 2 inch [analog recording tape] gives you a warmer feel for your low end.
MS: Is there any specific person who's preferred for mastering Bass records?
TM: Mike and Ron Fuller out of Miami. They master the majority of all Bass records.They did everything, all the Luke, 2 Live Crew stuff. [Jon writes this down]
MS: It seems like all the top hits are very sexy, suggestive records about women. Is that part of the Bass lifestyle, the nature of Bass records or is it just that sex sells?
TM: Well ... I think it's just the nature of us glorifying our women in some way or another. When you think about Bass, you think about girls shakin' on the dance floor.
MS: So, is that part of your motivation for making these records?
TM: Yeah. I may not be able to have a group or individual with the latent capabilities of another rap artist. But if I can get you with the hook and keep you on the dance floor, then you'll buy the record.
MS: But what about just wanting to see girls shaking it on the dance floor?
TM: It's all good. I think that's why Luke can successfully still play here. 'Cause I don't think they really understand Luke .... some of that southern hospitality. [??-ed.]
MS: When you go to record, do you start with the beat or the hook or work around the hook?
TM: I work around the hook because all of my records are hook riffs. Even some of the weakest beats with the right hook on it, you'll still be OK. Because people get so caught up in the hook that they take their minds off everything going on, and you got 'em.
MS: Have you ever used the same beat on two different records?
TM: I haven't. I've used some of the same sounds.
MS: Do you think that's a bad thing?
TM: I do. I think it shows a lack of creativity in a producer. But sometimes it can be effective. I know that two people had the same beat—Poison Clan's "Shake Whatcha Mama Gave Ya" and Half-Pint out of Miami has the same exact beat on an album.
MS: Did that cause controversy?

We got the beats: The legendary SP 1200. (photo: K. Salcido)

TM: Between the artists and the producer.
MS: It was the same producer using the same beat on two different artists around the same time?
TM: Yeah. It was ugly.
JK: I noticed that Planet Rock seems to be the inspiration for a lot of Bass records. Are there any other records that have been foundations for Miami Bass?
TM: "Planet Rock" is a big one. "It's Automatic" by Pretty Tony, Egyptian Lover is constantly resampled.
JK: Which song is the big one, "Egypt Egypt?"
MS: What about "Al-NasFysh?"
TM: It used to be, it was one of the early jams. But with the new changes, not so much anymore. A lot of people sample "Planet Rock" now and they don't realize it's a sample from Kraftwerk, and they only pay for the part that [Tommy Boy's] Tom Silverman has, I think it's only 25% [of the copyright]. That's historically known as the most expensive sample of all time, something like a dollar a record.
JK: It's so easy to program that beat, if you're smart, you'll just make it up again.
MS: If you just turn on an 808, you got it.
TM: Yeah, but there's some other stuff going on in there.
MS: Every music scene has their drug of choice—the ravers all like ecstasy, the alternative rock kids do heroin, the hippies are all taking acid. Is there a drug that's the mainstay of the Bass community?
TM: Drugs really aren't a part of it, at least not on the surface. You don't hear guys on Bass records talking about huffing. I don't really deal with it—I'm probably the only person in the record business that has never had a beer.
MS: Actually, Prince Paul's never had a beer. But I wasn't asking about you personally, I was asking about the general funhouse.
TM: I would say marijuana then and probably alcohol.
MS: Where do most of the kids find out about the new music?
TM: Bass music is more a street music thing, because your average teenager can't hear about it in a club, and radio does not really support Bass music. You hear it on the street and of course with mix tapes.
GR: Do you mix stuff for the streets?
TM: Yeah. A lot of times before I do a Bass project, I'll have a DJ do a mix tape of everything we're working on and shoot it out, and get the word back from the streets. I tested "My Baby Daddy" that way. I never put out a record without testing it before it comes out.
MS: For someone that had never heard Bass music before, what song or record would you recommend?
TM: I'd say "Planet Rock" would be one of the best.
MS: What about right now, what's the best Bass record out there right now?
TM: The record I really like is "Whoomp! There It Is."
MS: What do you think about the whole Techno music scene?
TM: I don't have a lot of experience in it. It's a regional thing and it doesn't work everywhere.
MS: Are there any similarities?
TM: The fat beats, but different types. In the big House markets they do well, but not in the mass market.
MS: Jon, do you have any more questions?
GR: Jon's a little preoccupied just right now [getting into the spirit by sampling the Bass scene's favorite relaxant].
JK: Oh yeah. To qualify for the videos, is there a minimum or maximum requirement for their measurements? For the size of the booty.
TM: Well, you have to realize that the camera makes you look a size too big. Some of the girls you see in the videos that have asses that are the bomb, they really aren't the bomb. There was this girl in one video that looked like she was out of control and then when I met her in real life I was like, "Where's the ass that I saw?"
MS: You know they do sell butt pads...
JK: They should use the wide lens to make the butt look bigger like they had the tall lens to make Paula Abdul look thin.
TM: Whatever works, man. The brothers, we like 'em big, so they gotta have 'em. Gotta have 'em!
GR: Is the Booty ever in the studio when you are recording, like for inspiration?
TM: I need to send you one of my postcards [see main photograph]. I also wanted to tell you, I'm working on a Bass mix for the Jerky Boys. That's some funny shit.
JK: Did you find a hook?
TM: A lot of things floating around. You can just imagine what the club mix is gonna sound like.

The Dusties recording in the bush.

THE DUKES OF BASS



Remember the pumped-up cars, the lucious "Daisy Dukes" and the redneck cops who were always trying to lock up the good guys? No, fool–we're not talking about Hazzard County here. It's all about Miami Bass, and the men who made it famous. The story of two guys who shook the tail of two cities.

By Dan Catalano
Photos By Zane Hurley

The first thing you gotta realize is, man, Miami was a freak scene in the 70's. Up until 1960 it had been just another Jim Crow tourist trap, with the entire black population shoved into Overtown and the rest of the city sitting fat and happy on the cocaine-white beaches, buying tropical drinks with their Social Security checks.

But then all hell broke loose. Castro started kicking it down in Cuba, smoking a big fatty on national TV and scaring the shit out of JFK with his black caterpillar mustache and funny-looking hats. Pretty soon Cubans were pouring into the city by the planeload, bringing a much-needed dose of salsa flavor to Miami's bland white cracker. After they paved the way, other island neighbors–from Haiti and Jamaica mostly–started dropping by as well, and the local black populace started moving wherever the hell they wanted (not that they had much of a choice –the city was tearing the shit out of Overtown to make way for a new highway). And then, god help us, the hippies started moving in–dropping flowers, brown acid and Krishna chants all over Coconut Grove while the local residents began dropping dead of heart attacks just trying to figure out what the fuck was going on.

And it was in this seething cauldron that Miami Bass was born. See, up to that point Miami didn't really have much music to call its own. Sure, there was reggae and merengue and calypso–as well as a burgeoning DJ scene–but nothing truly born and bred in the city on the ocean. The closest thing to a "Miami Sound" was a new instrumental party groove called Bass, which basically stole the fat 808 kick from Afrika Bambaataa's "Planet Rock" and added a stomach-churning low end, making it perfect for cruising *and* carousing.

It was these two Miami passions–booming cars and slammin', bikini-clad women–that would ultimately end up taking Bass to the next level. And the story of how it got there is really the story of two men: Luke Campbell and Bo Crane. In many ways, these two couldn't be more different; one's a former gang member and maverick record mogul who took his potty mouth all the way to the Supreme Court and won, while the

other is a cautious, lily-white businessman who probably pays his every speeding ticket on time. But both men, in their own way, played the Bass scene for all it was worth, spinning a new sound out of the Miami ghettos and into cars and clubs the world over.

It all started with a guy named Tiny Head. It was around 1979, and Bo Crane was looking for a way to pump up his bank account. An independent record promoter, he had already made a fair chunk of change in South Florida by going where few other white promoters would go–deep inside the urban market. But selling other labels' music to local radio stations wasn't exactly his dream job, so he was thinking about expanding into club promotion, or even starting his own label. Around this time he got a call from Tiny, the leader of a local DJ crew who wanted desperately to start his own club. "So Tiny Head and I went to the place to see this guy Zeke about renting Studio 183," Bo recalls. "I mean, it's called Studio 183 now–at that point it was just an abandoned JC Penney's."

After poking his little head around the empty store for a while, Tiny conferred with Bo and they decided they didn't want to do the deal. That left the space open for the next guy in line–another local DJ named Luther Campbell. "He was one of these guys with a mobile disco set-up," Bo recalls, "running a crew called the Ghetto Style DJs. This was before he'd met the 2 Live Crew or anything. And he was an unassuming guy, a nice guy, you know–just trying to get ahead."

Luke ended up passing on the club as well, but he took Bo's card and they talked about maybe working together. Eventually, they did end up doing a little business–Bo helped promote a few of Luke's early records–but the meeting was mostly symbolic. From that point on, as the Bass scene blew up, Bo and Luke would basically divide and conquer, each staking their claim to one part of this new Miami music: one as artist and innovator, the other as savvy entrepreneur.

Luther Campbell was born in Miami, to Jamaican parents, but he had always wanted to live his life on a larger stage. By the time he had turned his street crew, the Ghetto Style DJs, into a six-figure business in the early 80's, he was already casting around for a bigger slice of the pie. "I was one of the first people to bring hip-hop acts down here," he claims. "I brought Run-DMC down, Jeckyll and Hyde, all these different guys." The problem was, the Northern hip-hop explosion just didn't go over very well down South. Especially in Miami, where people like to kick it up and get wild, not just stand around admiring a DJ's nimble fingers and some tricky verse.

"People weren't too particular about high end," Luke admits. "It had to be bass, and it had to be fast. With a lot of blacks here being from Jamaica, Haiti and the Bahamas, it was like, 'if it ain't got no bass in it, it ain't right.'" So the young DJ decided to take matters into his own hands. He had been working with an outfit from Cali who called themselves 2 Live Crew–trying to pump up their Miami reputation, get them a record deal, that kind of thing. "There were different members in the group then, and they were doing a totally different kind of music, more like Run-DMC." It was at that point that Luke decided to get actively involved, changing 2 Live's members, music and--most importantly–their lyrics. "At the time, I was listening to a lot of Eddie Murphy, Redd Foxx, Rudy Ray Moore doin' Dolemite," he recalls. "So I said 'hey look, going the explicit direction would be the perfect direction, 'cause there ain't nobody else doing this shit.'"

This marriage of Miami's upbeat, bass-heavy jams with Luke's porno-party rhymes was a match made, if not in heaven, then in the back room where God goes when he wants to get a few shots and a lap dance. 2 Live Crew's first single with Luke, "Throw the 'D'" (featuring the immortal phrase "It's all in the hips, so go berserk/and let that dick do all the work") was an instant street-party smash, establishing the band as the nastiest, rowdiest and most explosive crew around.

Bo, on the other hand, wasn't doing quite as well. After some serious thought he had finally started his own label, Pandisc, in the early 80's. "I thought 'well, I know all the radio program directors, and they'll play my records for me if I ask 'em to,'" he says, sounding a bit sheepish. "So I started my own label, but nobody would buy 'em, because they were just awful records." Stunned that people weren't bum-rushing South Florida record stores for Pandisc platters (like their disco remake of Barbara Hackland's "I'll Bake Me a Man"), Bo was beginning to despair that he might lose the label entirely. But then, finally, lightning struck.

"In 1986 this guy brought me a record," Bo explains. "What had happened was that we had seen these kids in the black parts of town with these big sound systems, competing against each other to see who had the loudest sound. They would pull up to street corners in the ghetto and would actually tap into the electricity in the light poles. And they had these huge fifteen inch bass bins stacked three, four on top of each other, producing that huge bass sound which everybody liked, that would thump in your chest and help you dance."

The problem was, these performances were impromptu, with MCs freestyling over a Bass groove while the DJs pushed their sub-woofers to the limit, in a Southern version of the great New York MC battles of the 70s. Bo had the foresight to realize that these improvised cuts appealed to rap fans and car stereo freaks alike, creating a potentially huge, as-yet-untapped market. Hence, Pandisc's first Bass album sold very well, putting the company on track to become the largest purveyor of instrumental Bass in the country.

Meanwhile, Luke was joyfully reaping the rewards of his nasty musical monster-a creation he had dubbed "Ghetto Bass," but which was soon known simply as Miami Bass. After a string of successful (if commercially unplayable) jams like "Some Hot Head" and the 2 Live statement of purpose "We Want Some Pussy," the Crew finally toned it down enough to score a national hit with "Me So Horny." Although the song got Tipper Gore's panties in a big ol' wad, got George Lucas huffing over the label's infringement of *his* character copyright Luke Skywalker—an extra 'y' being no

This marriage of Miami's upbeat, bass-heavy jams with Luke's porno-party rhymes was a match made, if not in heaven, then in the back room where God goes when he wants to get a few shots and a lap dance.

excuse—and probably gave Stanley Kubrick (from whose Full Metal Jacket, the title line had been lifted) a ten-year migraine, kids ate it up, pushing sales of 2 Live's *As Nasty As They Wanna Be* well past platinum.

To everyone's surprise, Luke didn't immediately blow all of his loot on strippers and drugs and end up sharing a cell with (*Diff'rent Strokes* burnout) Todd Bridges. Instead, he managed his money wisely–making a bundle in blue chip stocks and even investing in Clearly Canadian soda (although he wisely pulled out before people realized they were drinking something with "Canada" in its name). He also expanded his label, now simply 'Luke' Records, finding success with groups like H-Town and Poison Clan, and bought a Miami mansion with a yacht and a huge golf course for a backyard.

The mistake people made, Luke says, was to confuse his on-stage persona with the man pulling the strings. "Sure, Luke gets more pussy than Luther Campbell–Luther Campbell's a fucking workaholic. That motherfucker goes to work at ten in the morning and ends up at three in the morning," he says. "Now Luke, on the other hand, goes to all these concerts, goes out there to play golf, and is just fucking and fuckin' and fuckin'." This perception still haunts Luke to this day, making it hard to convince people to trust his business sense. "They think I'm just fucking every day," Campbell complains. "I mean, I might fuck every day, but it ain't like I'm gonna walk into your office and get some head right there and shit!"

"We revel in the fact that we've got the loudest fucking CD's on the planet," Bo says defiantly. "Hell, we tried to get registered in the Guinness Book of World Records, but they wouldn't allow it. They said it was too dangerous–can you believe that?"

The idea of a young black man making a fortune off such gleeful obscenity, predictably, didn't sit well with Miami's conservative retirees and tight-assed government officials. But, amazingly, almost every charge thrown at 2 Live Crew–from willful obscenity to copyright infringement (for their sampling of Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman")–was eventually decided in the band's favor (with one exception: George Lucas' 1990 suit against Luther for using the stage name Luke Skyywalker was settled out of court, with Luke reportedly coughing up $300,000). And the fact that law students everywhere are, at this very moment, carefully studying the lyrics to "Pop That Pussy" should give us all renewed hope in the U.S. legal system.

But, while Luke was fighting his way toward the Supreme Court, Bo was finding success in a much more subdued fashion. His initial trickle of instrumental Bass albums had turned into a flood as the market both expanded and became more focused. Unlike the national appeal that Miami Bass enjoyed, Pandisc's so-called "Boom'n Bass" was concentrated almost entirely in Florida and California car culture. "These were suburban and rural white kids, males between the age of 18 and 34," Bo explains. "They have a job, own a car, maybe have a credit card, and are

BO & LUKE DUKE IT OUT
Who's the real king of Bass?

Sure, they both did their part to pump Miami Bass into the mainstream, but can either of these old-timers truly lay claim to the sacred title King of Bass? To check their bass quotient, we threw some serious questions to see who had the knowledge and who should go back to college.

1) What's the most influential track in the history of Bass?

Bo: "We Want Some Pussy"

Luke: "I Wanna Rock"

Point: Bo.

Although he played the safe bet, it takes a gentleman and a scholar to pick his opponent's song in the very first round. Luke's choice of a little known, if influential track by Devastator X is commendable, but he's just going to have to accept the fact that he lost out to himself.

2) What's the optimal level of bass response when mixing a Bass track?

Bo: Well, we've got the world's record at about 167.4 db, which will basically kill a small animal.

Luke: As low as low end can get. It should make your heart beat, and when you put it in your car, it should fuck with your breathing.

Point: Bo.

It was a close call-Bo's unseemly bragging and blatant disregard for the safety of small animals almost did him in, but his technical knowledge ultimately gave him the edge.

3)What's the smoothest ride of all time?

Bo: A convertible or a jeep, because you want that obnoxious sound blaring everywhere, so people will look at you.

Luke: A Mercedes-Benz 500-E.

Point: Luke.

Bo's got a good point, but his lack of specifics (and the fact that he himself drives an Acura) lost it for him.

4) What's the perfect melon size for a woman's backside: Cantaloupe, Pumpkin or Watermelon?

Bo: Smooth... more like a honeydew.

Luke: Watermelon. No, two watermelons side by side. But firm, none of that flabby shit.

Point: Luke.

Bo's odd focus on texture totally missed the point of the question. A honeydew? Come on.

constantly fixing up their sound systems.'

This peculiar variation of Bass often seems more like an exercise in engineering than actual music. (See page 74) Artists go by names like Techno Bass Alliance, Beat Dominator and The Bass Mekanik. Tracks tend to have few words, a speaker-damaging low end and titles that are accompanied by arcane notations like "Peaks at 50 Hz, Reversed bass swells from 20-40 Hz." Although Pandisc has a few knock-off Miami Bass acts (and, more impressively, is still releasing original records from the grandfather of X-rated R&B, Curtis 'Blowfly' Reid), it's this white-bread, bottom-heavy Bass that is truly their bread and butter. They even have a flashing-neon Pandisc van with a kick-ass sound system that they display at various Bass competitions, just to help get the word out.

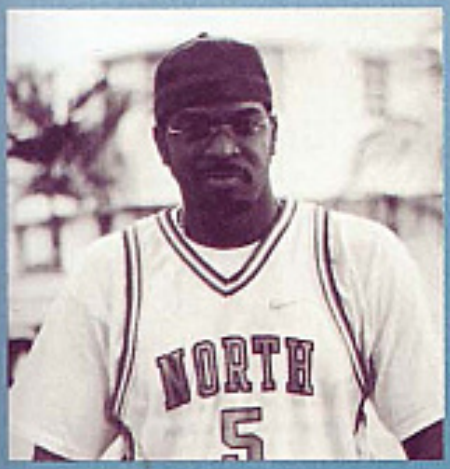
"We revel in the fact that we've got the loudest fucking CD's on the planet," Bo says defiantly. "Hell, we tried to get registered in the Guinness Book of World Records, but they wouldn't allow it. They said it was too dangerous –can you believe that?" So the next time you feel your bowels churning as a Jeep convertible rolls by, pounding Bass so heavy that it feels like it might crack the sidewalk, you know just who to thank.

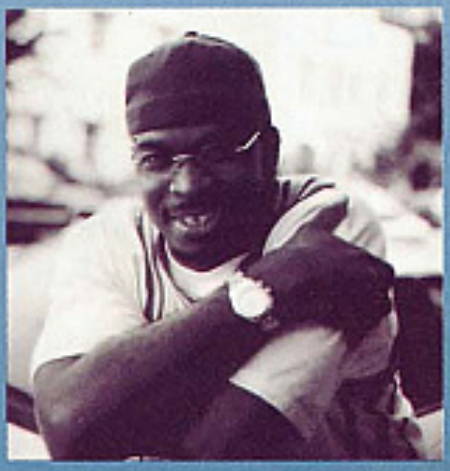
And if you have to thank Luke Campbell for anything, thank him for sticking around. After all, who else is going to kick up some nasty trouble, drive the women wild and get everybody's ass moving out on the dance floor? Amazingly, after splitting with 2 Live Crew, steering Luke Records into and out of bankruptcy and giving up his mansion to one of the three women he's had children by, it still seems like Luke has barely begun. In the next few months he's got a solo album coming out, bit parts in two new movies—Ice Cube's *The Players Club* and *Interstate 95*—and a new talk show pilot directed by Robert Townsend (a toned-down version of his Pay-Per-View "Luke's Peep Show"—see page 66), for which he's hoping to get a syndicated deal. Says Luke: "It's clean. It's clean as fuck. I'm surprised, you know? When you're doin' the show, you don't know if that shit's gonna be corny or not. I was like 'wow, how the fuck did I pull this shit off?'" And who knows–after all the recent violence blasting through the hip-hop world, maybe people are finally ready for a good, old-fashioned booty-shaking party vibe again.

"They think I'm just fucking every day," Campbell complains. "I mean, I might fuck every day, but it ain't like I'm gonna walk into your office and get some head right there and shit!"

"All my critics used to say 'all you sing about is this X-rated shit,' but everybody's doing it now," Luke points out happily. "The hottest shit on the charts is adult oriented: Li'l Kim, Biggie, R. Kelly, everybody! But I don't say 'yo, I remember you was frontin' back in the day, now look at you on this record.' I don't say that–I just say 'a wise man just opened his eyes.'"

Amen, brother.





5) What's the best jam to seduce a woman by?

Bo: Marvin Gaye, "Let's Get it On"

Luke: The Isley Brothers, "Between the Sheets"

Point: Tie.

They're both fine choices.

6) Who'd you rather go out with: a stripper, a lawyer, or a schoolteacher?

Bo: A schoolteacher by day, stripper by night–because she's constantly working with kids.

Luke: A stripper, because she's gonna keep it on the real, have an open mind about the situation. A schoolteacher's gonna be too uptight–although she'll probably be a wild freak in bed. And a lawyer'll slap you with a sexual harassment suit soon as you're done.

Point: Luke.

He's obviously given the question a lot of thought—although Bo gets points for creativity.

7) Michael Jackson calls asking for a Bass remix of his latest single: what do you do?

Bo: Get the money up front.

Luke: I'd say "All right, I'll bring three girls over and we fuck 'em all, and I'll do the remix afterward. If you ain't gettin' no pussy, than I ain't fuckin' with you. Simple as that."

Point: Luke, all the way.

Who says this man doesn't have any principles?

8) What's the best angle for watching a woman work it on the dance floor?

Bo: Down low. Just get near the pole, down low.

Luke: From behind. 'Cause when she bends over, boy, whoo! You see both holes.

Point: Tie.

It's a trick question, anyway- there really is no wrong answer.

9) What's the best movie for getting a woman all wet and wild?

Bo: Luke's Peep Show, on pay per view.

Luke: Basic Instinct. When Mike Douglas fucks her up against the wall, it's like you there.

Point: Bo (even though Luke's show is cable TV, not cinema).

After all, do you really want to show a potential paramour a movie where the heroine kills her men when she's done fucking them?

10) Who's the King of Bass?

Luke: I am. I'm the fucking king of bass. I ain't frontin'.

Okay, we have to admit we didn't even ask Bo this question, because the whole contest was basically rigged from the start. Sorry, Bo–no one ever said that Bass was fair.

Game, set and match: Luke

LOST TV

"Probably the third highest-rated Pay-Per-View show in the country," according to its host, Luke's Peep Show may prove that Luther Campbell is as much a King Of All Media as Howard Stern. Airing twice weekly on Action Pay-Per-View, LPS is not just another talk show. "We do all kinds of wild shit—We show the uncut versions of videos, we do a lot of skits and shit, we interview a lot of artists, we have girls laying down, girls eatin' other girls out. There's a bunch of freakin' going on, a bunch of naked people doin' all this wild shit, and it's just like 'What the fuck?'"

"It's the perfect interview for the Beastie Boys, the perfect show for them. You know what I'm saying?" Sure Luke, we know what you're saying. But first you might want to hear what our friends Tribe 8 had to say about their episode of the show—an episode, for some reason, you decided not to air:

The Tribe 8 Episode Of Luke's Peep Show

"This woman who produces the cable show, she is a feminist and is getting really tired of Luther's degrading women, you know, like butthole tricks, right? And he tells her, he wants some women on the show and she was like 'I'll get some women...'

"So she knows who we are, knows what we are about, and she calls us up and says that Luther wants us on the show to, like, discuss censorship and first amendment rights. Now, we as a band are all about bridging the gap between punk and hip hop and all that, we are really excited... So we fly there, and they have this limo for us, and they put us up in this huge huge hotel and give each of us our own suites! We are all used to staying on people's floors and scabies-ridden couches, so we are freaking out...

"We go to do the show, we get on his boat and he is just totally stoned out of his mind. And the first thing he asks us is what we do in bed. Just like, starting out with the lowest, most homophobic bullshit. I'm a butch dyke, and he was saying stuff like 'You got tits, but you're a man...!'

"And he's freaking out because we are acting like all these other women on the boat. You know, all in g-strings and stuff. We were sitting on his lap like he has these other girls do, and just fucking with him. We thought that something like this was going to happen, so beforehand we had all put on strap-on dicks under our clothes. After him trying to get these girls to do like, butthole tricks, revenge was staring to brew in our minds. So finally, we all whip out our dicks, and I had this big knife and I just chop off one of the strap-ons and throw it over the side of the boat, and they all started chanting "Bobbitt! Bobbitt!". "We also memorized part of a 2 Live Crew song and sang it to him—[singing] "Ass Up, face down/ Thats how we like to fuck" or something. And he was totally confused because he didn't get what we were trying to imply, that's what we wanted to do to him, fuck him in the ass with a strap-on.

"He freaked out and begged us to get off the boat. He was completely not in control of the situation, so they never aired the show. We had fun though."

—Lynn Breedlove, as told to Jessica Hopper

Photo sequence from top: Lynn flirts with Luke ‡ Luke asks how lesbians have sex ‡ Tribe 8 reply with the strap-on demonstration ‡ Gettin' down ‡ And the dildo that had to die. [photos courtesy Tribe 8]

How to Assemble Your Grand Royal Bass Jeep!

1. First, the easy part—Punch out all pieces from the perforated card.
2. Assemble speaker cone, interlocking tab and slot A to lock. Then attach to speaker cabinet by inserting tabs B & C into back of cabinet.
3. On sides of cabinet, fold in the small tabs (on larger tab D & E) and insert into cabinet back slots D & E. Unfold the tabs to lock. (This will be the same basic routine for the rest of the assembly).
4. Now, the hard part—Set the speaker cabinet down and pick up the body of the car.
5. Fold everything right now. Crack your knuckles, and take your time, because if you rip it apart or mangle it in the process, you're going to have to buy another issue to try again.
6. Interlock tabs F & G on the bottom of the car together.
7. Now lock the tabs H & I on the headlights into the front grill slots H & I. This is a little tricky, but you'll get it.
8. Next come the seats: The tabs go in the floor where they oughta go. Adjust the seat backs to fit.
9. Okay. Now do the back of the Jeep. Fold up the panels, inserting tab J into slot J to create the floor for the speaker that's coming soon.
10. For the roll bar, there are two slots behind each door. The tabs on the ends of the bar each go in the top slot, from the inside and then back through the second slot.
11. Attach windshield/dash section to tab and adjust tab, so that the windshield is at a proper angle. Carefully bend dash into position.
12. Install speaker cabinet into rear.
13. You're ready to cruise the strip!

Engineered by Evan Mack/ Designed by Fritz Michaud

WHO U WIT?

HOTLANTA

ROLLIN' IN ATLANTA WITH LIL' JON

DAVE TOMPKINS RIDES SHOTGUN.
PORTRAITS OF JON BY BEAU TEAGUE.

DATELINE: HOTLANTA.

Every Bass reference given me is preceded by a "he is Atlanta Bass." In this case it's Lil John—Jermaine Dupri's A&R for the So So Def Bass All-Stars projects—the first of which sold over 700,000 copies due to a blow pop Bass deaky called "My Boo" in which Daisy Dukes girls swab their Pathfinder to the beat. Born and raised in Atlanta, Lil' Jon also produced the (watch closely now) *hottest Bass record in Atlanta*, "Who You Wit?" (Ichiban)

We're rumbling in his brazenly gold Silverado which doubles as a mobile soundsystem. Thoughts wrestle between the real reasons why (a) Too Short moved to Atlanta; (b) Braves hitter Bob Horner moved to Japan and (c) why fancy dancin' Falcons receiver Billy "White Shoes" Johnson left Houston for Peachville. Lil' Jon points to various strategic Freaknik freak spots as we move through the westside. To the right are repeated half-loops of minimalls—chock full of minimalls which are chock full of Nails, Boutiques and Wigs.

"Freaknik is some other shit, man. You gotta be here to experience it. We'll pull up and turn on the 'Who You Wit?' song and motherfuckers just be bouncing like this [waves arms at shoulder level]. See the bullhorn back there, right? Some girls start dancing and all of the sudden about 100 people surround the girls. We have to clear 'em out cause we don't want the girls to get hurt. So we turn the siren on the bullhorn and they scatter.

"Niggas slam dance to this shit, straight whylin'," he says before remote controlling its blast. The song has an infectiously chaotic Onyx tumult, yet is all chants and Bass. Like DJ Kool, it's fully interactive (the "Renegades Of Funk" chant version is my shit). "Freaknik is some straight party guys-tryin'-to-get-laid type of vibe. A million to three million people, sometimes. The city tried to player-hate it but they can't stop it. Especially with the rappers giving it shoutouts in the songs. It makes too much money."

Atlanta's under a siege that makes the freaks come out all day and night. The lines for nails wrap around buildings in anticipation of the night's Club 559 workout. Last night, Kizzy Rock was on 103.3 and played one of Jon's SoSoDefBassAllStars songs, one by some girl cooing Ready For The World's "Love You Down" over "Push It." Then another singing over Jamie Jupitor's "Computer Power," which is an Egyptian Lover spin-off. Then this Nate Dogg type singing "I saw you at the mall..." over Freestyle's (Pretty Tony) "It's Automatic." Not to be confused with Debbie Deb (see Pretty Tony) from "Look Out Weekend": "I went to the mall and saw so many guys." It's like the commercial Bass songbank rotates Merry-Go-Round, 80s R&B cheese with the classic electro songbank. And So So Def boasts as the first to have singing over Bass for the mainstream. Uhh, sample clearance?

Jon shrugs. "I always clear all my shit. But I have had some problems," he laughs. "I always work it out. It's all about money. I've used all of Pretty Tony's records. I even heard a Bass record using 'Cars.'"

Better than Kool G. Rap?

"Bass has no boundaries. Atlanta's taking it to the singing level now. Most of it has singing hooks. Miami started it, but Atlanta's the trend setter, really takin' it over.

"I started listening to Bass in high school. All I listened to was 2 Live Crew, Gigolo Tony all that old school Miami stuff. Along with Too Short and Shy D of course. 'Get It Girl' was my shit...and—what's that one?—'Head Booty and Cock what your mamma like..' [we sing together]. 'Throw That D.' I'm still trippin' that Poison Clan used Shaft on 'Dance All Night.' [Incidentally, Professor Griff did a song with Poison Clan, and the Minister Of Information has held true to his name with a bevy of Bass numbers, including that of Beatmaster Clay D].

"Bass is just party music," Jon continues. "As long as people having a good time, they don't care what you say. And they really wanna hear some good hooks, something they can sing along and identify with. People don't wanna have to figure anything out."

What's the response in New York?

"When we did 'My Boo'—it's 'Planet Rock,' they can't diss their own. We got a lot of good sales out of New York. What I'm tryin' to do with So So Def with the Bass stuff is so people won't just identify it with booty shakin'. It ain't all about booty shakin'. It's about partying. It's called Rhythm and Quad. Putting R&B singers over Bass tracks. People stereotype it. I'm not gonna say it's not about the booty shaking, but it's not *all* about the booty shaking. It's about partying."

I need to get glamour shots of Bass models, I tell Jon. Jon says I need yellow hair and gold teeth and takes me to the West End Mall, across the street from Big Man Package Check Cashing. At West End Mall, everybody recognizes Jon, local DJ party celebrity and purveyor of fine community Bass. 'Cept there's a white guy in tow, fidgeting with busted Realistic Pearlcorder S907. Gentleman at the celly ranger kiosk says he's got a complete rap package for Jon and then asks me "when the new Beasties shit coming out?"

I say: "They're doing a Bass record with the L Brothers and T Ski Valley."

He gives me a strange look.

Two high school girls at Lady Foot Locker ask to be in the next video, clucking "You're ...you're ... that guy... I know who you are ... I want props." Their friend admonishes: "All you're gonna be is a prop." I don't take their pictures because the last time I took pictures of high school girls, I got in big trouble.

We go into a record store and Jon points at the hot seller showcase behind the counter. "Who You Wit?" is there. I ask for some Maggotron and the guy behind counter is like "Huh?" We then pore over the Bass section. Behold the detonators: Booty Bass, Booty Mix 2, Virtual Bass, Nasty Rap, Booty Bass 3, Bass X's Bass, FreeBass, Bass Mekanik, Quad Maximus, Bass Cube, Bass Cube 3, Bass Zone, Bass Patrol, Bass Alert (good to see Techmaster P.E.B.'s still around), Nights Of Bass, And Then There Was Bass, Bass Creations, Bass Outlaws, Best Of Bass, Bass Syndicate, Bass Hits From The Bottom, Bass Explosion, Bass Connection, Bass Addiction (where's the fucking Maggotron?) Bass Funk Syndicate, Erotic Bass Delight, Bass For Bassheads, Boom 2, Beat Dominator, Techno Bass, Bass Station Zero (and most of these from independent labels?), Ultimate Bass Blast (oh shit...) History Of Miami Bass...

Jon: "What's on that one?"

"It's Yours."

Jon: "RUN DMC on that motherfucker!"

And a sample song listing from the shit: "Boot the Booty," "Work It," "Kitty Kitty," "Ooh Lawd," "Humpin' In Ya Back," "Donkey Butt," "Rodeo," "Ride 'Em Cowboy" and "Nasty Dancer."

We go by Club 559—the raw shit. Jon advises, "Do not take your girl to the club. By the music's nature, she's gonna dance with somebody and get freaky."

On the way to the Dekalb Flea Market, he pages Mr. Mixx and his-boy-that-knows-Too-Short. I call Shy D, Raheem and DJ Jelly. Of course, I get no answers, but it sounded ill.

"There'll definitely be some freaks here," Jon advises. His focus on obtaining Bass model photos is commendable. I have to remain steadfast and can't be woolgathering about why Shy D hasn't heard from DJ Mann in ten years. In the gnat market, we happen upon Eddy's Gold Teeth, as advertised by the grinning Jaws-sized maw glowing on the vast, airbrushed sign. Flanking Eddy's blinding molars are several large photos of gold fonts. Peeking around the Au are some pearlies, but they are few and far between. I want those Justizm joints that Sir Vicious put on top of his leather Gucci cap.

Two leggy Jamaican girls—tight dresses, green and yellow respectively—greet Jon with hugs, how-you-beens, and video recruitment play. The Lil' Kimmy one agrees to let me snap my first-ever Bass model photo shoot. "Get my tattoo! Get my tattoo!" It reads Luscious. I think of all the cheesy shit fashion photographers say while they're clicking, not unlike the touchy-feely guy around the office, always fondling repressed secretaries under the guise of backrubs. Then I think of the busted chicks MC Chill had on his album cover behind a fake-ass beach backdrop. However, the ladies at Eddy's are advanced placement. We depart for the next level.

It's four o'clock (when freaks start wearing less clothing according to Jon), and The Silverado jam pony express pulls into the lot of Blue Flame, Atlanta's oldest strip club. The Blue Flame is in Bankhead, where pioneer Kilo founded the "Bankhead Bounce," (though Sir Menelik prefers Nikki's, and DOC's been spotted at the Gold Club).

Do they take it all off?

Jon lets out a "whaat?" Then, "Damn! This ain't the Cheetah. This is a real strip club." Then, "They stick the pussy in your face and make it breathe." LJ steps in and is greeted by an immediate shoutout from the DJ, 4 Play and Kilo's "Show Me Love." Jon hits 4 Play with an advance of Bass All-Stars Volume 2 (distributed thru bigtimers Sony): The Bass is always tested at go-go clubs before radio. That's Atlanta. Both he and SoSoDef CEO Jermaine Dupri are emphatic:

If it doesn't move the ladies working the go-go clubs, then it ain't gonna move shit.

Luke's "Put 'Em In The Buck" comes to mind as Pleasure executes swinging onstage acrobatics not dissimilar from the floating silhouettes in the James Bond credits. In the corner, an inconspicuous sign mumbles, "UNLAWFUL TO TOUCH DANCERS." The selection is basically Bass with a few Quiet Storm drops for the bump 'n' grind. Periodically, Jon flings Georgies on the runway and shambles back to our table.

"It's like tipping the DJ," he explains.

The support and looking-out is contagious wherever Lil' Jon goes. I hear Debbie Deb's "When I Hear"—no, wait, it's another SSD "All Star," "Freak It," by Lathun. Being that I have to experience this Bass investigation firsthand, Jon funds a couple of table dances in my direction, to the dollar dollar hollars of his records. One of which is a Bass version of the Nocera/Mantronik joint "Summertime, Summertime." Invariably, Pleasure's stuff is all up in my face, and it—well, refer to the previously mentioned Digital Underground quote. Is Erick Sermon's rim shop still open?

After a round of applause, DJ Smurf's crazy fast-ass "Pop That Pussy" romps for Liberty City, as we plot how we're gonna make out of here with some pictures. I'm flashless and suggest snapping the girls in the bathrooms. Not the girls "going" in the bathrooms, you sick fuck. But just some tasteful, artsy, fluorescent-lit shots round the commode or some shit. The dancers politely are not 'bout it, and The Blue Flame is then hit with five consecutive Master P songs. And everybody knows it.

"Did you see how the energy level elevated when he played those songs?" Jon emphasizes. "You're not gonna hear hip hop in there—just Master P and Bass." Lil' Jon reiterates that he's "crunk," meaning hype.

We leave as the sun cracks over the mound, parting ways—Jon to Tennessee, me to seek out the FreakNasty posse (an unfruitful journey which left me hanging out in a country bar with a bunch of honkys and a fine gentleman known as Mr. Grits 556—but I digress). Ass-out and on the highway, Organized Konfusion's "Numbers" rings thru the sub-woofers.

[Editor's Note: None of Dave's shots developed. Sorry for the tease, Mrs. Leech.]

Miami Spice

How to install the boomin' bass in your car

By Ubiquitous Virge

There is no such thing as too much power.

At least 150 watts of RMS power with low THD (total harmonic distortion) is usually adequate to rattle windows and license plate frames.

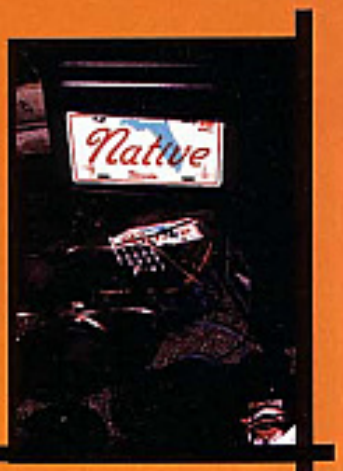
Bass Tubes have become the most popular forms of subwoofers. They deliver good punch without taking up too much space. But don't be fooled by its simplicity: a lot of physics and acoustics go into making those things. If you decide to go the do-it-yourself route and buy pre fab tubes that you put your own woofers in, you may be a little disappointed. It's the overall design that makes these things hit with so much attack. I normally dis instead of endorse, but I have found the SAS bazooka tubes to be the best. Bazookas were the first bass tubes available, and after their debut in 1985, a host of imitators flooded the market. They aren't the cheapest, but they look the best, have more impact, and offer an amplified version as well.

Band Pass boxes are the new hype. These subwoofers are designed for low sub bass applications only and will only give good results with the right crossover. What's different about these is they are made in such a way that you don't even see the woofer. They come in the form of a nondescript rectangular box that has internal chambers that pipe the bass through a port hole. This design gives the feeling of a huge woofer with out taking up much space. It's funny, car audio is always trying to catch up with home audio technologies, but now it's all turned around. Many of the new home subwoofers are of band pass design, especially the small subs that you can put next to the TV to give the home theater surroundsound set ups a little more bottom end.

Bass Reflex boxes are the traditional plain woofer boxes. This is like throwing a huge pair of home speakers in the back of your car. It isn't as refined as the other two designs, but it's easy to make. The bigger the woofers used, the worse it sounds to the occupants of the vehicle, but the people on the street 30-40 ft. away feel it like a quake! There is more bass outside the car than there is inside the car. This is the shit if you want to go cruising down the street and have everyone notice you—including the cops, who will be glad to cite you. These subs work great in pickups where the bed becomes one huge boom box.

Beware of swap meet brand amps like Unic, Rockwood, and Kenford (not to be confused with Rockford or Kenwood). These amps appear to be huge in scale, but take off the cover and look inside and a tiny circuit board surrounded by a lot of empty space is revealed. Also the power rating stamped on the box is music peak power, not RMS, so it's really hard to know what you're working with. Not to mention all the noise suppressors you'll need to get it listenable. The same caution should be used when selecting those pre-made boom boxes covered in grey trunk carpet with steel waffle grills and horn tweeters firing from the top. If you open it up, you will find a huge woofer with a tiny magnet stamped Made In Taiwan, a tweeter so cheap it doesn't even have a magnet, and all this is strung together with the frailest wire available. This kind of shit gives my profession a bad name. Don't get me wrong, bargains will always exist. But if it looks too good to be true, it probably is. No matter what someone else tells you, always use your ears. A good amp is critical for good bass, but selecting the right subwoofers is the other half of the equation.

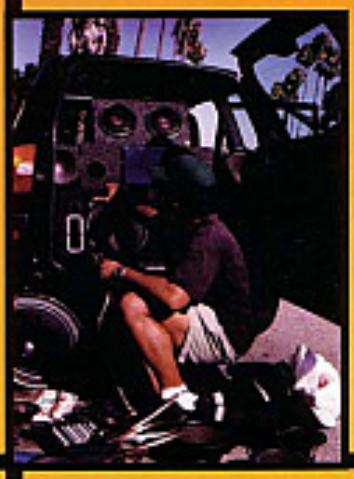
1



Raw ammunition: A grip of woofers and mid-bass drivers hand picked by yours truly from Rockford, Fosgate, Bazooka, and JBL.

2

800 watts of Kenwood amplification under each seat ought to make those little hairs on the back of your head stand up. Speaker loads are carefully checked to prevent overheating during crucial bottom-dropping megamixes.



3

We carefully arrange the tower of woofers in a configuration which will be both aesthetically pleasing to the eye, and ensure that Grandma feels it in her bridgework two blocks away.

Miami Spice

4 1/4 in. teflon steel braces are welded to the sides of the payload then attached to the box using bolts normally found in earthquake zones anchoring a two story house to its foundation.

5 The largest available JBL Competition Series Woofer, 18 inches with 400 watts power handling. Commonly seen in the Hollywood Bowl and other large scale auditoriums. Should do nicely.

6

The tricks: A signal processor from Aphex electronics boasts two main controls, a "big bottom girth control" and an "aural exciter." Sounds like a sex toy, huh? This device is the most worthless thing I've ever used—Mike D. had me install one in his ride and remove it within a week. But I couldn't resist sharing it with you.

Buckle up, boys. It's time to fly this baby.

7

Boomin' The BEATS Thru The STREETS In Your JEEP

(the sociology of bass music cruising)

By far the most offensive form of pop music today is Bass.

Heavy Metal went Top 40 years ago and through alternative rock radio acclimation, even punk rock has become publicly palatable. Bass music has the formula: it's fast, sexually explicit, and untraditional. I'm sure any true "music connoisseur" would tell you, "that isn't music at all -there's no music in it," then go back to listening to their mature rock collection, be it progressive, alternative, or indie.

Like any offensive art form, it's a great way of getting attention, especially in a vehicle roaming populated public streets, beaches, or parking lots. In fact, the music has been designed and reformulated to maximize the attention received in vehicles with sufficient bass systems. It's music designed for the stereo, bass pumped low and long enough to vibrate the chest of the girls on the sidewalk.

Bass rollers seem focused, even though they may not have a destination. Their mission is to turn heads with the combination of their vehicle and their low-end. What's it like to cruise with the Bass? Do you instantly attract loose women, gay men, free food, or just police with decibel meters? And how can I find out without buying and lowering a $30,000 ride and installing a $5000 bass system?

Thanks to the Ubiquitous Virge and his long-time friend and customer David Oman, I got my chance to roll Bassed-out, booty in the air one Sunday evening. Virge filled the entire rear of a Rav4 with enough low-frequency speakers to simulate the take off of a Saturn 4 rocket. After replacing David's Donald Fagen and Alanis Morrisette CDs with Booty Mix '96 (Intersound), Ghostown DJs Ghetto Bass Beats (So-Le Jam), Bass Apocalypse: World Bass War vol. 1 (Pandise) and the Fresh Kid Ice Bass Sampler, we were off to torment LA's Yupper West Side with the fury of the boom.

Scene 1: Santa Monica Promenade

Arguably the most populated marketplace in North America, the Santa Monica Promenade is an outdoor mall spanning five blocks of 3rd Street in Santa Monica, California. You can't actually drive down the Promenade, but you can drive through the cross streets at the end of each block. Hordes of people cross the street when the light is green and they pile up like the subway wait at rush hour when the light is red. That is to say, if you pull up and wait for the light, or simply pull off to the side near the light, you've got a large audience. We pulled over, pumped the Bass, and waited at the window with a pencil and paper for some girls to come ask us what we were up to for the rest of the evening. Hundreds of people looked. Some stared. Some frowned. Not many smiled. No one approached us, except a traffic cop who we couldn't hear but we assumed she was asking us to move so we pulled back into traffic and continued on our

way. This was our first stop and though we weren't successful, we weren't about to get discouraged yet. There's plenty of ground to cover. These people are probably all tourists anyway. Europeans and Japanese may be curious, but not yet accustomed to the Bass.

Scene 2: Venice Beach

Venice Beach on a late Sunday afternoon seemed like a good bet. People from all over Southern California descend on Venice Beach on Sunday evening and the beachgoers would just be clearing out and making room for the arriving evening crowd. We'd roll through right about the changing of the guard. We cruised down Ocean Avenue slow, Bass so loud I felt like emphysema was forming in my chest. Turning heads is easy we're realizing, but then what? We're not certain what the next step is, or what to expect. Do we pull off into the Subway parking lot and wait for someone to approach us and say, "Hey, heard your Bass. Nice Bass," or do we just drive on until someone flags us down? Perhaps we're already getting the full experience by just turning heads. It's fun, but it definitely seems like there should be more.

Scene 3: Brentwood Cafe

Off to Brentwood. If we can't make friends with this Bass system, at least we can offend people. The restaurant where Nicole Brown Simpson had her last meal is closed down so we found an outdoor cafe where patrons were enjoying $17 chicken sandwiches, pulled to the curb in the red and pumped the Bass. This is good. The response is similar to a white man walking into an Indiana Denny's holding hands with a black man; everyone stops eating, turns their head and stares with daggers in their eyes. I called out to a guy who had stopped with his sandwich midway to his mouth and asked, "Excuse me, sir, can you feel the Bass from where you're sitting?" Perplexed, he nodded his head. Offending the eating and watching the waiters try to sort out what to do about us was fun, but the real payoff took place a few feet up the street where a beautiful, rich West Side family was discussing their next Sunday evening shopping move. They'd taken notice of our pulsing blasts of rhythm and call-to-ass-shaking lyrics and a woman nearing retirement age had begun to dance. The family smiled, we clapped and went on

A HOBBY SQUAD EXCLUSIVE

By Ian C. Rogers

our way happy to have brought joy to those in search of fun as well as having offended those with less open minds.

Scene 4: West LA Softball Game

Now this is inviting. A softball game. These folks have a planned event going on where the only noise is the thump of the big ball hitting the mitt and the chatting of the fifteen family members passing the time in the small bleachers. Up we pull, Bass booming from the rear, taking the parking space closest to the game. Neither the players nor the spectators took notice of our booty quake. Aside from upsetting a couple of dogs in the nearby dog run, we were completely ignored for the first time all day. This must be what true Bass defeat feels like. We backed out, almost taking out some small children (who can hear kids playing behind the Rav4 when "Damn! You Got A Ghetto Booty!" is pounding in your back? We can't even see out the rear window for our stack of enclosures.), and drove off disappointed but happy to be experiencing the full range of Bass rolling emotions.

Scene 5: Leisure World

What's left? Crenshaw Blvd? Too traditional. We need something good. Thinking quickly, we hopped the 405 to Seal Beach for an attempt to penetrate the geriatric fortress of Leisure World. Leisure World is a notorious retirement community whose gated entrance resembles the entrance to an amusement park and features an enormous metal globe. Getting in isn't going to be easy—we don't know anyone housed inside. But turn off the Bass, talk fast and casual and we're certain we can pull it off. Once inside, we'll either give heart attacks or be asked to come back once a week and lead a booty dance course for the elderly. At the gate, I said

I was coming to visit my great aunt for the first time ever. Her name is Edna Miller and I'm not sure where she lives. Good guess. Edna Miller lives in Berry Meadows, number two. They called Edna, told her John was here to see her, handed us a parking pass and opened the gate. We're in. Cruise away from the booth and crank up the Bass. Up it goes, but there isn't much of an audience; Leisure World isn't exactly a bustle of outdoor activity at 8pm on a Sunday night. We try to make a lap of the grounds but before we're even half way around, three golf carts speed up, two behind and one ahead, asking us to pull over. They ask us who we're visiting, where they live and if we've ever visited before. Five minutes of playing dumb and bullshitting later, they left us after just asking us to keep the radio off. By this point we were tired, Bassed out, and David wanted his car and his Donald Fagen CD back the way they were (he'd been a good sport, to be sure). Everyone wanted to go home, and fought my argument that we needed to see Edna in Berry Meadows and let her in on our scam so she isn't waiting for John anymore. We'd experienced everything except real police, and all passengers but me were happy with that. We entered the freeway and headed North, endorphins completely washed away from the earlier rush of confronting the public with our Bass. They dropped me off, I said thanks, goodbye, and went inside and danced for an hour to the Booty compilation in front of my full-length mirror before falling asleep.

There is little I love more than forcing people to listen to what I want to listen to, and our afternoon of Bass fulfilled that goal second only to playing records before a 15,000 person arena rock crowd. But it's the Bass music that gained the glances, smiles, dancing, frowns and disapproval. It's a roving, offensive dance party, and everyone you pass has a reaction. The mobile sound system lives in the Bass vehicle. I'm not sure I got the point, but I think I got the joke.